

Chairman's report

Shortly after the 2017 AGM 3 re-elected committee members stood down due to personal reasons:

- Bob Mills vice-chair and Membership Secretary
- Merrill Mills also membership secretary
- Brenda Newman committee member

Consequently Eleanor Mackintosh stepped in as vice chair and Janet Stacey took over as membership secretary.

Very Sadly after a long illness Dot Rider passed away.

The objectives and activities of the Green Street Green Association are to promote for the benefit of the inhabitants of Green Street Green and the surrounding area, the provision of facilities for recreation or other leisure time occupation of individuals who have need of such facilities by reason of their youth, age, infirmity, disablement, financial hardship or social and economic circumstances or for the public at large in the interests of social welfare and with the object of improving the conditions of life of said residents.

Well, this year I feel satisfied that we have more than fulfilled those objectives and obligations.

This year the Association made representation to Bromley Council regarding concerns expressed to us over accidents and danger at Glentrammon roundabout; general speeding and parking availability; yellow lines; the disrepair of the used car lot; the disrepair of the public toilets; Metro bus parking, noise and toxic fumes; road signage; street cleaning and The Biggin Hill Chapel redevelopment. We supported St Christopher's on the Green. We also supported our local school publicising the possible loss of the School crossing patrol and, if needed, would have made a financial gesture.

Outside we have had the roof repaired put up a new notice board; and knocked down the garden wall; Inside new flooring was laid. We engaged a different printing company and produced and distributed two newsletters which, with the help of our army of willing road contacts, were distributed to over 600 homes. One edition also contained a separate publication especially for GSG provided by Bromley Council making residents aware of the council's Snow Friends scheme. We held two quiz nights: one with a fish and chips supper and one with bring your own food and drink. We arranged an afternoon cream tea and an Indian Taster evening. We organised our annual December raffle and gave honorary membership to all local business that donated prizes. We then joined forces with Esther's December Pop In, to welcome Father Christmas, sing carols, sip sherry and eat mince pies.

If I say so myself it was not a bad year's effort for a bunch of volunteers!

There is no doubt that the maintenance of the Greenwood Community Centre is the largest part of this association's concerns and financial responsibilities but (with a little help from its friends) the Greenwood manages to support itself

and fulfil its obligations to hirers. The annual accounts reflect this and show we have had a particularly successful year in raising funds. I would like to thank the committee members for all that dedication and extremely hard work.

Looking forward, it is hoped that our longstanding plans to add disabled toilet facilities at the Greenwood, with the aid of a grant, will now press ahead. Chris Arnold has agreed to oversee this project and is eager to get started! We have also recently ordered new patio doors and understand that, to avoid that terrible draft and loss of heat, next winter the windows at the front of the hall will also be replaced. Oh and just to keep us on our toes, the drains are now giving us grief!

Our Greenwood Centre, where we all now sit is not just a polling station but is home to Crofton Academy pre-school and also plays host to myriad activities of which some residents are unaware: Esther's Pop In, Adult Yoga classes; The Coleen Mann Dance Academy; Carole's dog training classes; The GSG Camera Club; The Tweet Up; The Phoenix Flower Group; Weight Watchers; a Masonic teaching class; a Guide Leaders' session; Tina Hunter Tutorial groups; a jazz group rehearsal; a newly established Kids Lego Club and no end of children's christening and birthday parties;

At this point it would be wrong not to mention and thank our long-suffering neighbour Joyce for her tolerance of all these comings and goings and apologise for the inconvenience she sometimes has to endure with the parking.

An advert has recently been posted for the position of a much-needed part-time caretaker to undertake the day-to-day general maintenance and cleaning duties at the hall. It is hoped that the amount currently paid to an independent cleaning company will cover this expenditure. Interviews will take place next week with a view to engagement by June.

Looking forward, as well as maintaining and managing all the things that we have done this past year, we intend to take advantage of the financial help on offer from the council under the Public Realm Improvements Scheme and brighten up our local High Street. Janet and Esther will liaise with the local businesses and hopefully introduce displays of summer bedding baskets.

This year we will very importantly be supporting the British Legion as they celebrate the centenary of the end of the First World War. We will honour all war dead by displaying poppies on all the lampposts throughout the High Street. These poppies have already been purchased and we are now looking for a dedicated committee member to organise this.

We will also be supporting the GSG May Queen organisation. Criticism was levied upon the Association last weekend for not being involved with this truly British tradition. We have since been in touch with the May Queen Organisation and, with immediate effect, we will now be working more closely.

Our partnership with the Friends of Glentrammon Recreation ground will also be reinforced.

Yesterday I was shocked to learn that a strike had taken place on Wednesday at our local primary school and that another is scheduled for later this month. Sadly, the school is in the process of making two part-time specialist teachers for Music and Languages redundant. A petition is available here this evening for you to sign and help parents appeal against this decision if you wish. This petition is also on line. A statement was requested from David Abrahams, the Headmaster, and his response is also available to view here tonight.

So 'what next?' you are thinking – Well, yes we do have ideas, we do have plans! BUT we need even more. That's where you come in! Tell us what you want, speak to us, join us!

We need people on an ad hoc or convenience basis who are willing to help us out occasionally. If you have a particular DIY skill or an interest in gardening or can play the piano please register your interest with us and allow us to call on you from time to time. We need more affiliated members, and more committee members, more help, more feedback.

This is Green Street Green. This is your community. Please help us to make it a good one!

Margaret Lawrence

Chair of Village Society Committee & Trustee of Green Street Green Association