WERA newsletter

Warner Estate Residents Association August 2020

WERA

Since 1996, **WERA** has represented the residents of nine roads at the bottom of Muswell Hill: Redston Road, Danvers Road, Warner Road, Park Avenue North, Priory Avenue, Linzee Road, Clovelly Road, Baden Road and Priory Road (north side).

WERA acts on behalf of residents and monitors local issues that affect the area, including those concerning Alexandra Palace and Park, road safety and planning development proposals.

WERA contact
Secretary Joyce Rosser
020 8347 7684
joyce.rosser13@gmail.com

WERA website
www.wera-n8.co.uk

WERA under lockdown

Like everywhere, the start of the lockdown in March was a tremendous shock. All over London, the planned events were cancelled. Local areas looked like ghost towns, with almost no people in the streets, few cars, buses almost empty and, of course, quiet skies.

Almost straight away, the Thursday evening 'clap for carers' started, and this continued in WERA streets through the weeks into June, sometimes with musical events added, such as the one at the junction of Clovelly Road and Park Avenue North, which made it to *The Guardian*. Some residents have had chairs in – or just next to – their front gardens so they could talk to neighbours and other passers-by (obviously keeping the required social distance).

Many local houses displayed rainbow posters in their windows and on trees, with messages for NHS staff. On one rainy day in April a wonderful rainbow appeared. But it wasn't only NHS staff who were appreciated and thanked. It was also other care workers, public transport staff, waste and recycling collection teams, and many more.

Due to the lockdown, WERA has postponed its AGM until summer 2021. We won't be collecting the usual £3 WERA household annual subscriptions this year either – fortunately we have enough funds to keep us going.

However, we hope that later this year, possibly not until the winter, it might be possible to hold a WERA get-together with refreshments (perhaps we will call it 'WERA get-together – see your neighbours in the flesh again'). Further information will be circulated in the autumn.





Local news and activities 2019/20

Alexandra Park

With schools closed, many people working from home and government guidance saying that 20-minute walks were the maximum trips people could do, Alexandra Park has been of enormous importance to far more people than in a normal year. As the evenings got longer and the weather warmer, there were problems with noise, especially for residents backing on to the park. There were also some anti-social and violent incidents. The night-time closure of Alexandra Palace Way to traffic reduced these problems. There were mixed views about the impact of locking the Redston Fields gate overnight. Following Zoom meetings of residents (including WERA representatives) with Alexandra Palace, the police and local councillors, this gate is now being left open with an option to close it again.

The other problem has been litter. Friends of Alexandra Park and local online groups organised an impressive system of volunteer litter pickers – up to 100 people have been involved and they have made an enormous difference. All the volunteers received a message of thanks from Louise Stewart, Alexandra Palace Chief Executive, which said, 'The levels of litter being left this year have totally overwhelmed us. So I was expecting a flood of complaints, but they never came. We told you we were overwhelmed, you could see that for yourselves and you decided to help us…Thank you doesn't seem enough somehow but thank you and welcome to Team Ally Pally.'



Local shops and businesses

Even before lockdown, things were changing in Priory Road and Park Road. Londis expanded and, under an impressive new frontage, re-emerged as Nisa Local. The Blue Kitchen and Sushi Zone takeaways opened. Sadly, the very popular Nati's café closed and at the start of lockdown the little bakery (once called Queen of Tarts) also closed.

With the lifting of lockdown, it was good to see the new Kiss the Koala café open and, of course, the reopening of The Victoria Stakes and The Priory pubs (the latter having been smartly repainted). It is not known what, if anything, will take over the former betting shop.



Local news and activities 2019/20



Hornsey Moravian church

The Moravian church had a serious fire in December that started in the electrics for its Christmas tree lights. Fortunately, the church was covered by insurance, and just over six months later the work was finished. After extensive repairs, the church looks brighter and more welcoming than ever. It is due to open sometime in August. The church hall, rooms and corridors have also been decorated and the floor repaired and polished. Rev. James Woolford commented that 'It goes to show how, out of darkness can come light and hope for the future'.

OUR MP AND LOCAL COUNCILLORS

Catherine West MP
catherine.west.mp@parliament.uk

Hornsey ward councillors
Dana Carlin, Adam Jogee and Elin Weston

Muswell Hill ward councillors
Pippa Connor, Scott Emery and Julia Ogiehor

Write to councillors at:
River Park House, 225 High Road, N22 8HQ or email using firstname.lastname@haringey.gov.uk

Haringey Council
www.haringey.gov.uk 020 8489 0000

To report problems, such as dumped rubbish and graffiti, go to https://www.haringey.gov.uk/contact/my-account/sign-or-log-my-account

Metropolitan Police
If a crime is currently taking place and you are in immediate danger, dial 999. If you wish to contact the Metropolitan Police Service and it is not an emergency, call the non-emergency number, 101.

Our local Safer Neighbourhood Teams
Muswellhill.snt@met.police.uk
Hornsey.snt@met.police.uk
www.met.police.uk has lots of information about crime trends.

Our trees

Most of the plane trees in our streets had their three-yearly pollarding in the winter. WERA has been in discussion with the council tree officers about possible sites for new trees. Following a site visit in early March attended by Alex Fraser, council chief arboriculturist, and the householders, we have been promised two new street trees in Park Avenue North and one (possibly two) in Linzee Road. We are awaiting ground surveys to confirm that the chosen locations are free of underground services. We hope the new trees will be planted before the end of this year. If anyone else would like a street tree adjacent to their property they should contact their WERA road representative and/or Richard Green (see page 4).

Some residents have taken the opportunity to green our streets a little bit by planting around the bases of the plane trees. This is a lovely gesture.



Local news and activities 2019/20

Crime and anti-social behaviour

Apart from the problems of crowds in Alexandra Park, our locality is usually calm and safe. Local residents have used the WERA email group, which has over 350 members, to report issues of concern and to warn of possible frauds.

WERA is a Neighbourhood Watch group and attends meetings of Haringey Neighbourhood Watch. Patricia Pearl, Chair of Muswell Hill Safer Neighbourhood Panel, spoke at the 2019 WERA AGM, and WERA has a representative on this panel.

Priory Common Orchard and other green spaces

A group of volunteers continues to look after Priory Common Orchard (bit.ly/PCOrchardN8), usually on Wednesday mornings. Haringey Parks Department provides support by mowing between the beds and clearing away rubbish. Because of occasional noisy gatherings in the evenings that disturbed the residents of 1 Redston Road, the table and chairs were moved before the lockdown to the western side of the Orchard, next to vacant 110 Priory Road. (This large house has been empty for 20 years – a matter that WERA has taken up on various occasions with the council without any result.)

There are other community orchards in Haringey, but Priory Common Orchard, sited by a bus stop on a main road, is unique in being the most visible and accessible. This means that people are constantly wandering round it and looking at what is growing. The tools and almost all the plants used on the Orchard have been donated. Tools are left on the site, although occasionally they roam. A WERA member recently noticed one of the PCO wheelbarrows on the roof of the bus stop – someone's idea of a joke. We quickly got it down.

Priory Common's 'rainmeadow' or SuDS (sustainable urban drainage system) between Redston Road and Danvers Road could do with a bit more care and maintenance. In the past, WERA has organised occasional work sessions on both the rainmeadow and the shrubs along this stretch. The other local SuDS, the Rectory Gardens 'rainpark', which is bigger and has had more care and attention, now has a SuDS information board.

WERA as a community

WERA activities help to bring local residents closer together. So too does the WERA email group (wera@groups.io, formerly WERA Yahoo group), which has over 350 members and is a lively forum for exchanging information about recommended tradespeople, unwanted goods and local events and concerns. To join, email Dick Hudson at r.hudson@ucl.ac.uk. The archive of past messages can be accessed on http://tinyurl.com/q4badyd. Our thanks to Dick for all the work he does in managing the WERA email group and our website.

Newsletter

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jo@sharppencildesign.co.uk
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WERA COMMITTEE MEMBERS AND REPRESENTATIVES

Chair
Jim Jenks
2 Clovelly Road
020 8340 3130

Secretary
Joyce Rosser
46 Redston Road
020 8347 7684

Alexandra Palace and Park Statutory Advisory Committee
Jim Jenks

Alexandra Palace and Park Consultative Committee
Dick Hudson

Website and email group manager
Dick Hudson
r.hudson@ucl.ac.uk

ROAD REPRESENTATIVES

Clovelly Road and Baden Road
Jim and Ros Jenks
2 Clovelly Road
020 8340 3130

Danvers Road
Jeff Probst
Upper Flat, 2 Danvers Road
020 8341 9517

Linzee Road
Alison Walker
14 Linzee Road
020 8348 4133

Park Avenue North
Richard Green
24 Park Avenue North
020 8340 0725

Priory Avenue
Sally and George Walker
17 Priory Avenue
07976 294 016

Priory Road (north side)
vacancy

Redston Road
Ursula Maestranzi
88 Redston Road
020 8340 2668

Warner Road
Adrian and Robyn Thomas
30 Warner Road
020 8348 4897