

WERA newsletter

Warner Estate Residents Association June 2008



No Solution in Sight for the Palace

Uncertainty over the future of Alexandra Palace continues as the Council, the Firoka Group and supporters of the Save Ally Pally campaign continue with their three-way game of tag wrestling over the crumbling edifice, to the dismay of local residents.

Since the original scheme was thrown out by the courts for lack of proper consultation, Firoka and the Council's trustees have been engaged in further negotiations over the terms on which they are willing to move forward.

This process has been made even more complicated by the bizarre decision, before final terms were agreed and Firoka signed up, to allow Firoka to "run the palace" and receive the income from events bookings. That "licence" was cancelled, but the receipts have not been returned and are now an added complication. In the

meantime, the decision to allow Firoka to receive trust income has been referred to the Charity Commission by Save Ally Pally (www.saveallypally.com).

However, there are a few certainties: the building needs a vast amount of money spent on it to bring it fully into use (possibly as much as £34 million); it continues to deteriorate as time passes and the work is put off; and we are as far away from a solution as we were when the whole process started two to three years ago. Pretty depressing really — especially for those of us sitting on the committees which have been discussing the same topics for so many years without any real progress being made. But our representatives will soldier on in the hope that, eventually, some good will come of it and the palace will be restored to its rightful place in the community.

AN IMPORTANT DATE FOR YOUR DIARY

This year's **WERA Annual General Meeting** will be held at 8pm on Monday, 7th July at the Moravian Church Hall, Priory Road.

Mark Evison, Alexandra Park Manager, will talk on Recent and Future Developments in Alexandra Park.

WERA has also asked him to put forward for discussion a proposal for a path across Redston Fields.

Please come along, meet your neighbours and ask your questions.

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, including those concerning Alexandra Palace and Park, road safety and planning developments which affect the area and our properties.

WERA membership
210 households

WERA contact
Secretary Joyce Rosser
on 020 8347 7684
or jrosser@lineone.net

WERA website
www.wera-n8.co.uk

The **WERA** annual membership subscription is £2 per household. Please give your subscription to your road representative (see page 4).

WERA activities 2007/08



Local resident
Angela Berry with
Councillor Gail Engert



Redston Road flood

In July last year the water main in Alexandra Park (on the lower road near where the Farmers' Market is held) burst, resulting in serious flooding to about 30 houses in Redston Road.

Flood waters poured along our roads and Priory Road was closed to traffic for most of the day. Rob Worth, a WERA member, made a video of the flood (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U6OMy7WiRlw>). The emergency services and representatives from Thames Water and the Council were

quickly on the scene. Thames Water accepted responsibility for the resultant damage but the flooding caused great distress and inconvenience to the residents involved, more so because in 1976 the same main had burst, causing similar damage to properties. Residents wonder if it will happen again.

WERA organised a public meeting with Thames Water managers in October. Twenty Redston Road residents attended this meeting together with local councillors. Residents

wanted the trunk main where the burst had occurred to be replaced, not merely repaired, but the managers said that the current national investment programme was only replacing "distributor mains", that is, those that connect up individual houses; renewal of trunk mains would cost much more and lead to even more disruption. The managers have since met with the Council Emergency Planning Officer and Alexandra Park managers to see if the local impact of any future burst could be mitigated.

WERA YAHOO GROUP

Dick Hudson has set up a WERA Yahoo email group. A Yahoo group operates by everyone in the group receiving all the messages that are sent and any recipient can then reply to the message sender or to the whole group. Group members' email addresses are not made public and members can opt out of receiving messages if they wish. The other feature of a Yahoo group is that all the messages are archived and anyone can access the messages (even if not a member of the Yahoo group – although obviously access to a computer and the internet is needed). Currently there are about 80 members of the group.

Many of the messages are requests for tradespeople and services (builders, plumbers, IT consultants, etc.) and a useful directory of recommendations is being built up. Information about local events is regularly sent out and there has been a very lively debate about whether or not there should be a path across Redston Fields.

To find out how to join the Yahoo group or just to access the archived messages go to the WERA website www.wera-n8.co.uk and press "Communications".

Path across Redston Fields

There has been a lively discussion amongst WERA members about whether or not there should be a path across Redston Fields.

A large majority of responses on the Yahoo email group was in favour of a path. Supporters said that mothers with buggies could use the path as well as children at the local nursery school. The headteacher of a Muswell Hill primary school said it would be part of her plan to encourage parents and children to walk to school. Others referred to the "muddy quagmire" and said that an attractive path would enhance the area.

Objectors feared that a path could lead to more traffic

and antisocial behaviour and would spoil the natural look of the park. Other contributors to the debate suggested the best material and routes and possible ways of stopping cyclists or others misusing the path (all the responses can be seen by going to the WERA website www.wera-n8.co.uk and pressing "Communications").

As this is a topic about which local people feel strongly we have asked Mark Evison, Alexandra Park Manager, to draw up plans for a path across Redston Fields and come to the WERA AGM to present these plans (as well as talking about other developments in the park).

Green men

Early in 2007 new traffic lights were installed at the junction of Muswell Hill, Park Road and Priory Road.

Residents then noticed that the green men on the signals only appeared when the button was pressed, whereas previously they had appeared automatically. This led to a lot of confusion and was potentially dangerous. WERA contacted Haringey Council traffic department and Transport for London

(TfL); the former were very helpful, the latter were not – even though they were responsible for the change. Eventually TfL explained that the new system was "demand dependent" and that it had been introduced to speed up traffic. WERA considered that pedestrian safety was more important so requested that the system revert to automatic. After a lot of chasing, the automatic green men were reinstated.



Priory Common

WERA members continue their work to make Priory Common more attractive.

Last year we won a "Make a Difference" funding bid to buy a notice board for the common. This enables us to put up information about local events and also lets people know that this is "Priory Common".

In November for the third year running we planted bulbs on the common and this spring there was an excellent display of daffodils and some crocuses. We will be planting bulbs again this November (details to be circulated nearer the date). Do come along and join us!

Parking and traffic on Priory Road

WERA has taken up residents' concerns about the large vehicles parked on the north side of Priory Road which block visibility for drivers coming out of Warner Road and Danvers Road.

The Council traffic department says that it can only take action if the vehicles are parked illegally. The local removal company whose vans park on the road has recently agreed

to make sure its drivers avoid parking near road junctions.

Three years ago WERA carried out a speed survey of Priory Road traffic which resulted in the installation of the vehicle activated traffic signs which say "30 MPH Slow Down". Whilst this has had some effect WERA remains concerned about vehicles exceeding the speed limit on the road.



NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH

WERA gets regular information from the Muswell Hill Safer Neighbourhood Team and attends the panel meetings at which issues of local concern are discussed.

WERA COMMITTEE MEMBERS AND REPRESENTATIVES

Chair

David Liebeck
19 Danvers Road
020 8348 0457

Secretary

Joyce Rosser
46 Redston Road
020 8347 7684

Alexandra Palace and Park Statutory Advisory Committee

David Liebeck and Harry Aspden

Alexandra Palace and Park Consultative Committee

Dick Hudson

Alexandra Palace and Park Conservation Area Advisory Committee

Antonia Denford

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

Jason Beazley
8 Linzee Road
07957 143352

Park Avenue North

Jack Nouch
54 Park Avenue North
020 8340 6377

Priory Avenue

Colin Brewster
24 Priory Avenue
020 8348 4195

Priory Road (north)

David Shelbourn
56 Priory Road
020 8348 2523

Redston Road

Ursula Maestranzi
88 Redston Road
020 8340 2668

Warner Road

Robyn and Adrian Thomas
30 Warner Road
020 8348 4897

WERA WEBSITE

The WERA website is an important part of our role – enabling people to find out about the history of the estate, what WERA does and how to contact WERA officers. Its impressive design is due to Chris Matthews, formerly of Park Avenue North. It is now ably managed by one of our committee members, Dick Hudson, also from Park Avenue North.

CONSERVATION AREA STATUS FOR WARNER ESTATE?

Last year at our Centenary meeting we raised the possibility of the Warner Estate becoming a conservation area. WERA has not progressed this because the Council conservation team is currently too preoccupied with carrying out “conservation area appraisals” of the 28 existing conservation areas in the borough. Another way of recognising the rich architectural and design heritage of our estate would be to start a collection of photos on our website or even possibly having a competition for the best original and new features.

TREES

Harry Aspden, on behalf of WERA, has developed a good relationship with Haringey Council tree officers in discussing what type of trees should be replanted on the estate when plane trees have to be cut down (usually due to insurance claims from householders). We want to have replacement trees that will, as far as possible, match the existing trees but not lead to subsidence. It was thought that Norway maple trees would be suitable but two young Norway maples have had to be cut down in Clovelly Road because they were damaging the pavement.

Linzee Road is a special case because it has no plane trees; in fact it has very few trees at all. Even with three new trees there are only eleven in the street. The tree officers have agreed that Linzee Road should have more trees but they have to allocate trees across the whole borough so we will have to wait.

TELL US ABOUT YOUR SUSTAINABILITY PROJECTS AND IDEAS

WERA would like to have a meeting in the autumn at which residents talk about their own sustainability projects (solar panels, recycling, growing fruit and vegetables, etc.). Let us know if you would like to contribute.

WERA BOOK CLUB

There is a local book club of residents who made contact through the WERA email list. Anyone interested in joining the book club should contact Isabel Manley at 19 Warner Road (i_manley@msn.com).

FIREWORKS NIGHT

Last November there were complaints that the police once again raised the road barriers on our roads before the fireworks display had finished, which led to lots of cars pouring into the area and a resultant gridlock. This year WERA will make sure that the police and park authorities are aware of the importance of keeping the road barriers in place until well after the display finishes.

HELICOPTER NOISE

Residents are aware of the increasing number of helicopters – some police, some private – in the area. At the moment there is little that can be done, although the Greater London Authority has commissioned a report into the subject.