



# BRENTHAM NEWS

## Chair's Notes

**I**t's been a somewhat grey and dreary August but we were consoled with a fantastic sunny Bank Holiday making our little village in the middle of London look at its green and leafy best. The trees, hedges and allotments are not only a feast for the eye; they also create the perfect environment for healthy living, as discussed elsewhere in this issue.

It's fascinating to learn how the many other Garden Suburbs around the country have fared over the years, and in this issue we look at the varied fortunes of a sister suburb in Leicester. To encourage garden suburbs nationally to liaise and promote community living, here in Brentham we're building a

website to act as a hub for sharing ideas and planning a viable future for Garden Suburbs. With increasing pressures on the built environment this has become a pressing issue.

For some people, the appeal of Brentham lasts a lifetime. Barbara Murray, our guest of honour at this year's Strawberry Tea turned 95 in August and has been a stalwart supporter of the estate for most of her life. Barbara seems to be living proof that Brentham is a good place to live.

Good places to live are worth preserving and the Club, at the heart of Brentham, is proposing major changes to ensure its long

term future. The plans need careful examination and there are more details on Page 5.

Planning is never far from many residents' minds and the process is not always well understood. On Page 7 we have attempted to explain the main points affecting planning decisions.

Our Planning Advice Group -- [planning@brentham.com](mailto:planning@brentham.com) -- continues to offer all residents advice and help on this sometimes tricky element of living in a conservation area -- but of course the benefits are that the beautiful and pleasant area we've chosen to live in remains that way.

**Gina Mallin**

## Strawberry Tea

Barbara Murray, who hosted the traditional summer event for 35 years at her home in Winscombe Crescent, was the guest of honour at this year's Strawberry Tea. To mark the occasion, in a gesture that seems to meet with the Mayor's approval, Brentham Chair Gina Mallin presents flowers to Barbara. Ealing Central and Acton MP Rupa Huq said "As someone brought up nearby in Brunswick Road and Lynwood Road it's a special honour and privilege to be here. And having been elected just a month ago this has been the highlight of my second term in office!" We are very grateful to Mike and Anne Gandon, who opened their garden for the event for the first time, and to Ann Wolf who organised the strawberries, teas and cakes. Along with their helpers, all three did a magnificent job - enjoyed by all who attended.





## BBC chooses Brentham

Most recently seen in the 'Live from Alaska' series, Liz Bonnin was spotted filming in Fowlers Walk in June. When asked, she revealed that the new programme was called 'Animals Making Mischief'. However it was not an exposé of the local fox community - Brentham had simply been chosen as a really pretty and convenient place to shoot links to connect the various stories. The crew were between shoots in Gibraltar and Central America.



## Front Garden Awards

Our front gardens are a lovely sight in summer and we enjoyed looking at many colourful plantings and interesting designs. We made a long list of gardens we liked and these are the gardens shortlisted for the Summer Award 2017:

44 Denison Road, 42 Holyoake Walk, 56 Holyoake Walk, 11 Ludlow Road, 47 Meadvale Road, 56 Meadvale Road, 25 Neville Road, 27 Neville Road, 3 North View, 18 North View, 1 Ruskin Gardens, 2 Ruskin Gardens, 22 Winscombe Crescent and 14 Woodfield Crescent.



There were many other attractive gardens and it was a pleasure to walk round the Estate on a lovely summer day.

Well done to those who have successfully planted in the pavements. I tried planting around two trees near our house and came back from camping at Wimbledon for 2 nights to find the plants had died in the intense heat we had that week. I am hoping the bulbs I have planted will reappear in the spring! The more we can do to keep our environment green the better for all of us.

*Vicky Snodin*

## Brentham Open Gardens



More than 130 visitors enjoyed the annual Open Gardens day in June. The sun shone on the seven gardens on display and more than £1,100 was raised for the charity Mindfood - an ecotherapy social enterprise based in Ealing that supports people with mental health issues.

## Coming Events

### Open House Brentham Tours

16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> September: tours of Brentham. Learn about the estate's history and architecture with **Clive Evans**. The walks start from the Club at 10.30 am and are a must for visitors and all new residents.

### Pitshanger Pictures

Unless stated, films at 8.15 pm in St Barnabas Millennium Hall

9 September: Their Finest (12A) at 8pm  
10 September: Così fan Tutti (E) at 7pm  
13 September: Selma (12)  
20 September: A Day in the Life (E)  
11 October: Denial (12)  
18 October: 20 Feet from Stardom (15)  
21 October: Zulu (12) at 8pm  
22 October: Onegin (E) at 7pm



## Ealing Art Trail

8<sup>th</sup>-10<sup>th</sup> & 15<sup>th</sup>-17<sup>th</sup>  
September



Following the success of last year's event, the Borough of Ealing Art Trail will be once again taking place over two weekends in September.

Two Brentham residents are among 180 local artists who will display their work in 60 venues - including their homes, studios, cafes and public buildings. The full list of venues can be found at [www.ealingbeat.org](http://www.ealingbeat.org) or in the booklet available from the Pitshanger Lane library, Pitshanger Bookshop, the Brentham Club, and all venues on the day.

Local artist Celia Busby is once again showing mixed media, watercolours, acrylics & pastels.



By Celia Busby

Her framed and mounted work and original hand-painted cards will be displayed in St Barnabas Church.

Joining the trail for the first time is mosaic artist Rosanna Henderson who makes original mosaic art for indoor and outside spaces and will be displaying at her home in Meadvale Road.

Introduced to mosaic-making 10 years ago she loves the creative process and takes pride in the finished result.



Rosanna explains:

"I use traditional glass and ceramic tiles (known as tesserae), smalti and stone. I often incorporate stained glass, pebbles and other mixed media which give another dimension to my mosaics adding more interest, texture and depth.

"I love colour and nature which provides me with my main inspiration. Sometimes I will find an interesting piece of glass or the colour of a tile will give me an idea for a mosaic. Where possible I try to recycle and will use roof tiles, York stone, slate and even old kitchen doors as my base material."

Rosanna says that although domestic tiles can be cut to create bigger shapes, for fine detail she has to use the small specially produced mosaic tiles.

These come in hundreds of colours and textures which explains the many shelves stacked with polythene boxes in Rosanna's studio. "The only problem is that the best supplier of these tiles I know is in Lincolnshire!" she says. "Whenever we head North we always detour to restock my supplies".

Rosanna is passionate about continuing the ancient art of mosaics, but adopting her own modern, contemporary style. Her aim is to open people's minds to the endless possibilities this traditional art form offers.

One of Rosanna's bigger pieces was for the Log Cabin Children's Charity centre in Northfields.

Rosanna displays her work in Galleries, gives lessons in her craft and is happy to take



commissions. To celebrate ten years of making mosaics Rosanna made a film with Brentham Way resident Angela Kay. There's a link to the film - *An Artist's Story* on Rosanna's website:

[www.rosannasmosaics.com](http://www.rosannasmosaics.com)

Rosanna and Celia believe the Ealing Art Trail will help to raise awareness of the wide range of artistic talent to be found in the borough and are eagerly looking forward to the event.

# Humberstone Garden Suburb

*In the early 20th century, Garden Suburbs were springing up across the country but not all survived as well as Brentham. In the last edition we heard about Penkhill, in Stoke-on-Trent; this time **Clive Evans** tells the story of little known Humberstone.*

**H**umberstone Garden suburb in Leicestershire has many parallels with Brentham, and was indeed inspired by it. The workers who formed the initial management committee were from the growing footwear industry, for which Leicester was famous. They worked for the Anchor Boot and Shoe production society and in 1902, registered Anchor Tenants Ltd with the same objects as Ealing Tenants Ltd. They had several meetings with Brentham's founder Henry Vivian, and adopted the same Co-partnership finance model. They duly began collecting money from would-be tenants.



*Terrace of shops at the heart of Humberstone*

This did not go smoothly, but eventually in 1907 they bought 48 acres of land near Humberstone Village, which has its own long history. Henry Vivian was at the meeting to formally take over the land.

Raymond Unwin and Barry Parker, who designed Brentham, were asked to help with the layout of the new suburb but this was not wholly accepted: the notion of country cottages set along winding country lanes was rejected in favour of solid semi-detached houses along straight roads! The first pair of houses was opened in October 1908 at a rent of 6/6d per week. They had cost a total of £450 to build.

As time progressed, Humberstone – like Brentham – had its cash-flow problems, but these were overcome and

building continued. By 1913 there were 350 people living there. Recreational facilities were added: a cricket pitch, bowling green, tennis courts. Unlike Brentham, shops were built and over them a large room for recreational purposes. A community spirit was encouraged, a regular magazine appeared, there were dances and lectures, whist drives and Christmas Carols.

The First World War changed everything, and building slowed. The Anchor Boot and Shoe Society closed, part of the slump of the 1930s. Leicester City extended its boundaries to include the whole suburb, and took over the playing fields by Compulsory Purchase.



*Humberstone Today*

Humberstone Garden Suburb never became a conservation area, but interestingly it is still financed on co-partnership lines – probably the last one in existence. The management committee still runs the suburb, but is more interested in cost-effective management than in conservation. Recently, they replaced all the wood framed windows with plastic, double-glazed alternatives and likewise all wooden doors with plastic. Imagine the outcry in Brentham!

On a recent visit to Leicester, I asked to be taken to see Humberstone Suburb, but it took some while to locate it in the midst of a large housing estate. However, the houses are still there, as is the meeting hall, and the shops. A plaque marking the centenary in 2008 declares: 'Anchor Tenants - Not greater wealth but simple pleasures'.

It is to be hoped that the community spirit still survives.

For more information, please visit: [www.anchor tenants.org](http://www.anchor tenants.org)





## The Brentham Club – A New Challenge

As reported in the last issue, the Club's Management Committee is considering a new layout for the Clubhouse, which will generate ongoing revenue while still providing Club facilities. They have now appointed Baynes & Mitchell Architects to develop this plan, as they spell out in the press release below.

We have met two of the architects involved, to brief them on the history of the estate and the role of the old Institute. They were very interested and delighted to be involved in a project with so much social history behind it. We also stressed our hope that a home for the Brentham archive could be found within the Clubhouse.

As promised, we have written to everyone who made a personal donation to the Tower Fund,

offering a refund if they no longer wanted to support this new direction, but no one has taken up that offer, and several people wrote expressing their continued support, which was gratifying. Sadly,



however, both the Pilgrim Trust and the Sylvia Waddilove Foundation said that they felt that the new direction was not in line with their charitable objectives.

We remain ready to repair the windows at the top of the Tower, but given the aggressive timetable being pursued by the architects, that may not be worthwhile. They have asked us to hold back on this until they have produced initial plans. Otherwise, our funds will be dedicated to the establishment of the archive, once a suitable home has been identified.

There will be public consultations on the plans, once developed, probably in October. But the Club Chairman is convinced that this is the only way to guarantee the survival of the Club, so bear that in mind when considering any objections. Personally, I am excited to see what the new Clubhouse might look like, and am certainly keen to see the Club put on a profitable footing.

**Clive Evans**

### Statement by the Chairman of the The Brentham Club

The Club will use part of its 1911 building - the centrepiece of Brentham - to generate long-term income by introducing lettable residential space. The Club's footprint in the building will be reduced, rationalised and improved. Meanwhile the sporting facilities at the Club will be maintained and enhanced.

Baynes and Mitchell Architects, founded in 1995, is an award winning practice renowned for their expertise in the renovation and restoration of precious buildings. Their recent work in Chatham's historic dockyard has recently received Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA) regional and national awards and is currently shortlisted for the 2017 Stirling Prize - awarded by the RIBA for the UK's best building of the year.

Key to Baynes & Mitchell's success has been their acute focus on client and brief, the boldness of their approach to building conservation and their meticulous attention to buildings' detail.

Founding director Peter Baynes has lived with his family in Ludlow Road and Meadvale Road since 1988 so brings to the project a valuable knowledge and understanding of the Club and its importance to the Estate, both architecturally and socially.

Research and outline designs, currently underway, will lead to local consultations and a detailed planning submission during the Autumn and to construction in 2018.

**Stuart Thomson**

### Comedy at The Brentham Club

Following the club's first popular season of Comedy Nights, new dates have been announced featuring top professional acts fresh from the Edinburgh Festival.

Friday 22 September



MC: Kate Smurthwaite

Friday 20th October



MC: Marcel Lucont

Friday 24th November



MC: Ian Stone

## Trees in Brentham

What strikes you as you drive into Brentham - the houses, the trees, the hedges? This year the trees seem to have made more of an impact than ever before, and what's more, we now know that trees and hedges also help improve air quality by absorbing pollutants.



*Denison/Ludlow Green*

Street trees, garden trees, including fruit trees, and the lovely old oaks - how have we inherited such a rich legacy? It goes back to the strong beliefs of the architects who laid out the estate.

Old photos and maps show that Brentham was built on farm land. It was divided into a patchwork of fields with hedges of hawthorn and hazel and trees - mainly oak. Raymond Unwin who, with Barry Parker, designed the layout of Brentham, held the view that 'nothing so helps the early appearance of a building site as the preservation of existing trees'. He also believed in 'sensitivity to natural features and preserving links with the landscape's past'. On the boundary of the conservation area behind and to the east of Fowlers Walk and Brentham Way there remains a line of magnificent old oak trees on what was once the



*New planting in Ludlow Road c. 1910*

field boundary. Some hawthorn and hazel trees survive too.

Instead of felling mature trees that might have been in the way, the designers of Brentham left them in place and built around them, leaving us to enjoy the splendour of trees which are perhaps now over 300 years old. The magnificent tree on the open space between Ludlow Road and Denison Road is one such example.

Some others have not survived. Winscombe Crescent lost two oaks before Brentham was designated a conservation area.

Concerned with establishing a green and rural aspect, the designers left unpaved verges next to the kerbs into which they planted street trees at regular intervals - for example in Ludlow Road. Some survive now as mature lime trees.



*Winscombe Crescent: Mature trees and new planting c. 1910*

Over time many have been lost, almost 70 in the great storm 30 years ago in October 1987. They have been replaced with different species with a varying degree of success as some require careful pruning and controlling.

Today there are over 400 street trees in Brentham - Lime (120), Plum (51), Birch (45), Rowan (33), Maple (32) and another 16 common varieties.

Along with the street trees, the trees in our gardens create the special character of Brentham, and to preserve this all trees and hedges are protected by our conservation status. Almost all tree works require approval from the local authority, and hedges cannot be removed without planning permission.



The trees and hedges in Brentham bring advantages in addition to their appearance. Each tree is host to a huge variety of wildlife such as fungi, lichens, insects, squirrels and birds. The birdsong to be heard around Brentham is rich and wonderful, the more so for being close to major roads and industrial areas.

A final benefit of trees and hedges comes from their ability to improve air quality. A paper in the journal *Atmospheric Environment* says tall trees are good at absorbing pollution in more open areas, while hedges can trap toxins at exhaust pipe level, so reduce people's direct exposure to harmful pollutants.

Lead author Prof Prashant Kumar recommends that councils should plant low hedges between pedestrians and the street if pavements are wide enough. He writes: "The emissions from vehicles



*Hedges help shield homes from pollution*

start to dilute very quickly as you move away from the road - so any hedge that acts as a barrier slowing down the airflow and catching pollutants on the leaves is going to offer people in homes better protection."

For an interesting survey, including a reference to Brentham, refer to "Street Trees in Britain – A History" by Mark Johnston. [www.brentham.com](http://www.brentham.com)

## **The Brentham Society and the Planning Process**

Brentham is a model of creative, humane urban planning, which is best protected under Planning law, to safeguard its uniqueness for residents and the generations to come. Planning can sometimes seem complex, so we thought it might be useful to clarify how the Brentham Society works in terms of planning decisions.

The Society was set up in the 1960s before there were planning restrictions on the estate, and hedges were being removed for car spaces and picture windows were replacing our smaller paned versions. Our aim was, and is, to conserve the nature of the estate. We lobbied successfully for conservation designation with Article 4 Direction, which seeks to conserve the unique character of Brentham by removing most permitted development rights.

The responsibility for maintaining the conservation area is with Ealing Council, and the Brentham Society has no planning powers at all. Our influence on the planning process is exactly the same as any resident; we can object to any planning application in the same way that you can. However, with our knowledge of the planning process and of the Management Plan which the Council has developed for Brentham, we are consulted by the Council to aid their decisions.

With our detailed knowledge, we are able to advise residents if their plans are likely to be accepted. Sometimes if we suggest that the plans are not in

accordance with the Management Plan, it can seem that the Society is rejecting them. However, as explained above, this is not the case as the power all lies with the Council. It should be noted that most of the plans that have been considered by us pre-application are accepted, and that most of the plans that are rejected have not been seen by us pre-application.

Each application is considered according to the distinctive features of each house, its position, and impact on the CA designation. For example, a dormer may be acceptable on one house, but next door it may be rejected because of the different sight-lines of the house.

However, with the Council planning department under pressure from prolonged economic cuts, the job is harder when, for example, the conservation officer now only works 2 days per week. Worryingly, whilst officers follow the Article 4 Conservation Area management policies, it could become more difficult to maintain the nature of the estate as a whole, with "incremental damage" increasingly creeping in, and once beyond a certain level, Article 4 could be withdrawn. That would be catastrophic for our beloved estate.

Looking at applications which have been approved may help residents understand the way planning works. A list of all recent applications can be found on our website:

[www.brentham.com/planning](http://www.brentham.com/planning)

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### The Brentham Club

38A Meadvale Road, W5 1NP Telephone: 020 8997 2624 www.brenthamclub.co.uk

Established in 1911 as the community centre for The Brentham Estate, the Club offers a range of sporting and social opportunities for everyone, including Tennis, Cricket, Football, Bowls, Snooker, Darts and Bridge. Other activities include Yoga, Art and French classes. New members are welcome.

#### Regular Events

**TENNIS** – Saturday Family Flagship Sessions  
12.00–1.00pm, coaching for adults and children.  
£5 (with or without a child).

#### **BRIDGE**

- Wednesday at 7.25 pm
  - Relaxed Bridge, Friday at 9.45 am
- Open to visitors. If you don't have a partner, we have a host so you will be guaranteed a game.

#### **QUIZ NIGHTS**

Held monthly on Fridays at 8 pm.  
Money prizes and rolling jackpot: £1 entry per person with teams of 6 maximum. Food available.  
29 September 2017  
27 October 2017  
17 November 2017  
15 December 2017

#### The Perry Café

Try our ever-changing, versatile menu. Everyone welcome (non-members included).  
Monday–Friday 9.00am–4.30pm  
Saturday & Sunday 9.00am–4.00pm

**CHRISTMAS** – Bookings are being taken for Christmas parties at the Brentham Club. Various buffet menus are available.

#### Forthcoming Events

**COMEDY NIGHTS** from 8 pm  
Members £11.00; Non-members £13.00  
22 September, 20 October and 24 November  
**FIREWORKS NIGHT:** 4 November  
**ABBA NIGHT:** 8 December  
Check website for details and tickets:  
[www.ticketor.com/brenthamclub/](http://www.ticketor.com/brenthamclub/)

For hall/room hire or to book an event, contact Anwen Roberts on 020 8997 2624, 07402711982 or email [events@brenthamclub.co.uk](mailto:events@brenthamclub.co.uk)

For all other enquiries, contact the Club on 020 8997 2624; email [secretary@brenthamclub.co.uk](mailto:secretary@brenthamclub.co.uk), or go to [www.brenthamclub.co.uk](http://www.brenthamclub.co.uk)

