

THE COCKPIT

NEWSLETTER OF THE CHISLEHURST SOCIETY
(formerly the Chislehurst Residents' Association)

FOUNDED 1934 REGISTERED WITH THE CIVIC TRUST

The Cockpit, on Chislehurst Common, has been the traditional meeting place for Chislehurst people on all great occasions from time immemorial

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Hello there!

One again *The Cockpit* is here to inform all our members of the many activities your Society is engaged in to preserve and enhance our environment and community in Chislehurst. For the first time in thirty issues, however, it does not come from the editor who has done so much to promote and develop the Society and *The Cockpit*: Mr Peter Turner. We all regret that due to pressure of his business commitments, Peter is no longer able to continue editing our newsletter. He has given the Society sterling service over the years and we are all confident that he will continue to do so. *The Cockpit*, however, is now in the willing but less experienced hands of a new editor who begs the support (and indulgence) of members while she learns her craft!

The Cockpit is for all members, to keep us in touch with events which affect our community. If you have information of interest to members, or constructive suggestions for the enhancement of our environment here in Chislehurst, why not write a short piece for *The Cockpit*? The Executive Committee of the Society acts on behalf of members; we need your views and your support. Write to me, Frances Follin, at 7 Kincaig, Lubbock Road, Chislehurst. *The Cockpit* is YOUR newsletter.

A SOCIAL EVENING AT FOXBURY

Have you visited the fine house and beautiful grounds at Foxbury, Kennal Road, Chislehurst? It is the perfect setting for a convivial summer evening among friends. We are most fortunate, therefore, that our Society has been able to book the house and grounds for a social evening from 8pm until 10pm on **Thursday 19th July**.

Tickets are available from the chairman of the social sub-committee on 467 2796, **price £6 each**. Light refreshments are included in the price and a pay-bar will be open to provide a good choice of drinks.

The evening will be a pleasant opportunity to meet fellow members, old and new. An active membership is the life blood of an amenity society so come along on the 19th and help make the evening a memorable and enjoyable occasion.

Chairman:
H. T. G. BROWN
(081-467 3790)

Editor:
Ms F. Follin
7 Kincaig, Lubbock Road, Chislehurst

A WALK INTO HISTORY

Chislehurst Yesterday and Today

Bromley Council and the Society collaborated in organizing a walk, covering architectural, historical and other interesting features in Chislehurst, on 30th April. The walk began and ended at the *Queen's Head* and followed, with some asides, the route High Street, Prince Imperial Road, Watts Lane, Church Lane, Royal Parade and back through the Common. Mrs Jean Morgan, Senior Planning Officer with Bromley Council, led the walk and talked about the architectural and other features, with contributions from our Vice-Chairman, Bruce Hurn, and Vincent Dunleavy. The historical detail was splendidly presented by Roy Hopper, our Chislehurst Head Librarian. The event was voted a great success by those who came along.

Originally intended for people from outside Chislehurst, this series of walks now seems likely to be of interest also to many Chislehurst residents. We therefore intend to publicise future walks locally. The next one will take the same route as the walk described above, will start at the *Queen's Head* at 11.30am on **Monday 13th August** and will last about one and a half hours. (Please note that these walks are designed to cover quite different ground from the excellent walks organised over the years by Environment Bromley, which have introduced so many to the attractions of the Chislehurst environment).

JOIN US ON MONDAY 13 AUGUST

THE LONDON FORUM

The Society is now one of the 57 members of the London Forum of Greater London Amenity Societies. This body is still in its infancy but it is to be hoped that it will develop a much needed voice on planning questions which affect London as a whole. It has already played some part in the representations made to the Secretary of State for Transport which resulted in the cancellation of most of the huge road schemes in London put forward by his advisers. Our representative on the Forum is Mr. K. Leary.

REPORT ON AGM

held on 2nd May 1990

The AGM was held in the Methodist Church Hall, Prince Imperial Road, on 2nd May 1990. Our currently elected Ward Councillors, Mrs. J. Bryant, Mrs. K. Boughey and Mrs. J. Wykes were present, also the President of the Chislehurst and Mottingham Chamber of Commerce, Mrs. G. Theobald and the Chairman of Chislehurst and St. Paul's Cray Commons Conservators, Mr. H. Lindley-Jones. Unfortunately, our MP, Mr. Roger Sims, was unable to attend because of urgent duties at the House of Commons.

Officers elected for 1990/1991

Chairman	H. T. G. Brown
Vice-Chairman	J. Bruce Hurn
Secretary	T. Turner
Treasurer	N. Bell

Committee Members

The following were elected for a two year term: V. Dunleavy, C. M. Dunn, Miss F. Follin, K. Leary, Miss P. Rudkin. Other members of the Executive Committee already serving are K. S. Chapman, L. G. Holt, Miss P. L. Howley, Mrs. J. B. Jones, A. H. Lovell and Mrs. S. Moncho. (Miss. N. Comport co-opted).

Auditor

Mr. W. A. Page, for many years Treasurer, was again appointed Auditor.

Sub-Committees

These are formed from members of the Executive Committee and co-opted members and specialise in a variety of activities. The sub-committee chairmen for 1990/1991 are listed below:

Channel Tunnel	Mrs. S. Moncho
Editor of <i>The Cockpit</i>	Miss F. Follin
High Street	H. T. G. Brown
Litter	A. H. Lovell
Membership	K. S. Chapman
Planning	T. Turner
Public Transport	K. S. Chapman
Schools Liaison	J. Bruce Hurn
Social	Mrs. J. B. Jones
Traffic and Road Safety	K. S. Chapman
Trees	Miss P. L. Howley

Delegates

Advisory Panel on Conservation Areas	} C. M. Dunn, T. Turner, V. Dunleavy
Airfields Environmental Federation	
Bromley Residents' Federation	} Mrs. M. S. Holt
Flood Committee	
London Green Belt Council	} A. H. Lovell, A. R. Turner
Orpington and Chislehurst Road Safety Consultative Panel	
	} L. G. Holt
	} K. S. Chapman

Chairman's thanks

The Chairman thanked all those who had assisted the Society in the past twelve months. In particular, he referred

to the sterling work of our Road Stewards without whose efforts the Society would cease to function. The co-operation received from our MP and from our Ward Councillors was acknowledged and thanks expressed to Mr. A. R. Wells and Mrs. D. Laurence for their invaluable help with photo-copying facilities.

It was with regret that the meeting heard that our Editor, Mr. P. A. Turner, would not be standing for re-election, due to business commitments. Peter has been an outstanding member of the Executive Committee for many years and has been responsible for no less than 30 issues of *The Cockpit* (of the 54 published). We are glad he has offered to assist in the future on an ad hoc basis. The Committee is delighted that Miss F. Follin has agreed to take over Peter's work.

The resignation of Mr. A. R. Turner from the Committee was also noted with regret. Again, he has been a valued member of the Committee for many years and the meeting was glad to hear that he will remain a Road Steward, a delegate to Bromley Residents' Federation and continue his work for the Flood Committee.

On behalf of those present the Chairman expressed thanks to both the above members for their past contributions to the work of the Society.

Affiliated Membership of Schools

Due to the initiative of the Vice-Chairman, most of the schools in Chislehurst and also Ravensbourne College of Design and Communication, have taken up affiliated membership of the Society. The Executive Committee sees this as a major development for educational aspects of the Society's work, which was warmly welcomed by those present at the AGM, in particular by Councillor Mrs. J. Bryant. The liaison process is developing between the college, schools and Mr. Bruce Hurn.

Nominations for Pride of Place Award

Our nomination of the staff at Elmstead Woods Station received the top award for stations in the Borough put forward for consideration. In addition, a special Pride of Place Award was received by the Vice-Chairman for his work in the environment.

Lorry Parking

This is still a problem in certain roads. The meeting noted that the matter was scheduled for discussion at a meeting of Bromley Council's Technical Services Committee in May. The Executive Committee is keeping a careful watch on the situation.

Other matters

A variety of other matters was discussed, including the level of future subscriptions for membership of the Society, tree planting in the High Street and the need for traffic calming measures in the area. Proposals for the utilisation of the Alun Jones Memorial Fund were outlined by the Vice-Chairman. The current position regarding the Channel Tunnel Link was explained by Mrs. Moncho. Considerable discussion centred around the lack of security in the multi-storey car parks in central Bromley (See separate article). The provision of impact absorbent surfacing at the children's playground in the Recreation Ground was raised. This is a matter which had already been the subject of representations by the Society to Bromley Council, as a matter of urgency, at a time when Mr. Dunleavy's *Landscapes for Leisure* improvement scheme for the recreation ground was welcomed and is being implemented.

SECURITY IN MULTI-STOREY CAR PARKS IN CENTRAL BROMLEY

Considerable concern was expressed by a number of members attending our AGM regarding the lack of security staff in the multi-storey car parks in central Bromley. Since the closure of the Queen's Road open car park, members attending the Churchill Theatre and other evening functions have no open car park available to them within easy walking distance of the theatre. They find all available parking places in the High Street occupied and, therefore, feel obliged to use one of the multi-storey car parks.

Lady members have complained to the Society that they feel threatened and worried by the fact that there are no security guards in these car parks, particularly in the evenings. It is understood that none of the multi-storey car parks is even manned after 9pm. In addition, the path from the High Street to the car parks in Kentish Way is very unsuitable for pedestrians, especially unescorted ladies, during the evenings.

In view of these complaints, the matter was raised with the Leader of Bromley Council earlier in the year. Councillor Barkway has informed us that, so far, there has been no evidence that would warrant increased expenditure on security at the multi-storey car parks. He gave assurances that the situation would be kept under review in case any change is thought advisable.

Members felt the situation to be most unsatisfactory, one suggesting that the extra expense involved in providing security staff could possibly be met by an increase in parking charges.

As a member of Bromley Council's Technical Services Committee, Councillor Mrs. J. Wykes was asked at the AGM to do all possible to put our case forward. Members will be kept in touch with future developments.

GREEN CHISLEHURST

UN-AUTHORISED TREE FELLING

Following an alleged breach of a tree protection order when several mature trees were felled in Woodcliffe Drive, the Planning Department of the Borough Council were preparing to prosecute the offenders.

However, on legal advice, it was decided not to proceed as a small legal loophole was discovered in the Preservation Order, thus removing the chance of a successful prosecution. It is recognised that the spirit of the law was ignored.

As a result, all current Tree Preservation Orders are now being checked to ensure that they are valid and cannot be flouted in future.

PRICKEND POND

The major desilting operation, reported in the last issue of *The Cockpit*, has been successfully completed.

The ducks and geese soon returned and as soon as aquatic conditions are suitable the pond will be re-stocked with fish.

An assessment of the silt stacks was made recently, and when cracks appear all over the surface it will be sufficiently dry to "landscape" and sow grass seed. Some "pussey" willows will be planted at strategic points to enhance the natural look of this lovely amenity pond.

SAFETY IMPROVEMENTS at Chislehurst Recreation Ground

The Society has been informed that an impact absorbent ground surface will be laid in the children's play area, after the busy summer period but before the onset of winter.

Should the new surface be laid now, to avoid possible accidents in the summer? Council Officers considered this but their past experience, throughout the Borough, has been that parents strongly complain when play facilities are not available in the summer, even when closures are caused by safety work! Whatever their position on this question, all parents will doubtless be grateful that the Society's efforts to improve safety in the play area are meeting with such success.

The impact absorbent surface is not the only recommendation which we have put forward. Earlier this year, at the Society's request, one dangerous piece of play equipment was made safe by the Council. The scheme of improvements, put forward by the Society under the Landscapes for Leisure 1989 programme, has been largely accepted by the Council. Some suggestions have already been implemented, although the full scheme will take a number of years to effect.

AIRCRAFT NOISE

The Society's approach to the Civil Aviation Authority on the subject of increasing noise from aircraft flying over some parts of Chislehurst elicited an admission that Heathrow departures passing close to Chislehurst have increased by 16% over the last three years. CAA denied, however, that there had been any changes to the flight paths into or out of the major London area airports for many years: it was also claimed that aircraft leaving Heathrow's easterly runways should be at or above 4000 feet by the time they pass over Chislehurst and that this would be true also for aircraft leaving the Biggin Holding Pattern for Heathrow. Further progress on this issue seems likely to depend on building up a record of complaints about individual instances of noisy aircraft; members could help the Society's case by reporting noisy flights direct by telephone to CAA at the time. Ring 081 745 6597 and ask for a written reply. It would also be helpful if you would pass details of your complaint (and any reply received) to Mrs. Mary Holt, 13 Oakleigh Park Avenue, Chislehurst, Kent BR7 5PB.

The Airfields Environment Federation, to which the Society is affiliated, made strenuous efforts to secure the inclusion of aircraft noise in the *Environment Protection Bill* currently going through Parliament. Although the AEF's proposal was supported by a number of MPs, the Government has not so far been persuaded. The AEF will be exerting further pressure on Ministers and MPs on this issue and in due course the Society will be invited to participate in the campaign.

The Society has lodged objections to the proposed design changes to the bridge for the East London River Crossing; this modification would, if allowed, facilitate the use of larger jets at London City Airport and would lead to increased noise nuisance in the Chislehurst area. The Society will be making written representations to the public enquiry which opens in July.

The Society has written to Bromley Council supporting the establishment of the London Helicopter Advisory Committee and expressing concern about noise and safety problems that will arise from more intensive use of these craft.

The Society is now represented on a Bromley Federation of Residents Association's Committee which liaises with Bromley Council on all questions related to Biggin Hill airfield.

BEQUEST TO THE COMMUNITY

Chislehurst is extremely fortunate in having so many assets given by wealthy individuals or by "public subscription", from the rights over our commons to many buildings. The majority of our churches, village schools and halls were such gifts.

This public spirit did not cease in the distant past — the most recent example was the gift of the magnificent Hawkwood estate by Robert and Francesca Hall in 1958. Today large bequests are made by Chislehurst residents, from time to time, to charities ranging from the RNLI to animal welfare organisations.

It would be nice to think that there are still public-spirited individuals and families in Chislehurst with the wealth and the desire to benefit the whole community. Here is a suggestion for their consideration: the Chislehurst Society needs its own headquarters with facilities for its own use and that of other local bodies. Like the community buildings of the past this is surely worthy of their munificence.

If such a gift is beyond the means of a single benefactor, what about "public subscription" — the term so often used in the last century for contributions made by local residents?

What better or more tax efficient way of showing one's appreciation of one's time in Chislehurst than by making a bequest to our own local amenity society, The Chislehurst Society (a charity affiliated to the Civic Trust), for this worthwhile purpose?

PARK ROAD RESIDENTS SEE OFF LONDON BUSES

Full up — there'll be another along in a minute. And there was. And another. And another. Park Road became jammed with single and double-deckers as the full horror of LRT's crazy scheme for routing buses down this narrow residential street became all too apparent. On Bank Holiday Monday, 7 May, residents woke to find their road had become the new official route for the 61, 227 and 328 buses without any prior warning or consultation. Effectively this meant 152 bus movements a day between 6.00 a.m. and midnight with a combined weight of approximately 1,200 tons. The street is approximately 14' wide and a bus 8' wide. People sitting on the top deck got a bonus for their fares as they could see straight into bedroom windows as they passed by. A road of terraced houses with no off-street parking facilities, Park Road has long had serious problems with parking and with heavy and speeding traffic. Queen's Road, leading into Park Road and in a similar situation, also felt the detrimental effects of the new route. The narrow pavements, an additional hazard, are often encroached upon as thoughtless car drivers park their cars with two wheels on the pavement, forcing pedestrians to walk in the road. As a thoroughfare to the High Street it is used extensively by shoppers, including elderly people and mothers with children. Buses mounted the pavement on numerous occasions to get through so within days it was cracked in places. LRT could

hardly have chosen a more unsuitable road for their purpose, but once a bus route is established it is very difficult to alter. All these facts produced an instant, unanimous and vociferous backlash by Park Road residents and non-residents alike. Letters and telephone calls flew in all directions. Support came from all quarters, with our M.P., Roger Sims, weighing in early on. Bromley Council was extremely helpful. London Buses applied for double yellow lines both sides of the street but this was refused. A small committee was set up to help co-ordinate the effort and a petition was soon underway, which even bus drivers and their passengers signed. A site meeting took place on Monday, 14 May, between representatives of London Buses, Bromley Council and the local police. On Tuesday, 15 May, joyous residents were informed by the Council that it was all off and the buses would revert to their original route from midnight, Friday, 18 May. The petition, with almost 1,000 signatures gathered in a very short space of time, was presented to the Mayor to be lodged on file, as arranged by Councillor Mrs. Joan Wykes. A short sharp fight but it is so encouraging that the will of the people can be brought to bear. Meanwhile, Park Road residents will press ahead with their plans to get road humps installed just as soon as possible.

NATIONAL TRUST EVENTS

26 July 1990.

National Trust (Orpington & Chislehurst). Postal History Before and After 1840 — The 150th Anniversary of The Penny Black by Mr. C. G. Harman at 8pm St. Olaves School, Goddington Lane, Orpington. Enquiries: 0689 32911.

23 August 1990.

National Trust (Orpington & Chislehurst). The Wonder of Wood — An Evening of Poetry and Song — Tête à Tête at 8pm New Village Hall, High St., Orpington. Admission: £2. Enquiries: Ian Bartram 0634 666035.

13 September 1990.

National Trust (Orpington & Chislehurst). London's Green Belt: Its History, Problems and Prospects by Mr. R. W. G. Smith at 2.30pm Chislehurst Library, Red Hill, Chislehurst. Enquiries: 0689 32911.

27 September 1990.

National Trust (Orpington & Chislehurst). Biggin Hill and The Battle of Britain by Air Commodore Probert at 8pm Methodist Church, Sevenoaks Road, Orpington. Enquiries: 0689 32911.

11 October 1990.

National Trust (Orpington & Chislehurst). The Work and History of The National Art Collections Fund by Mr. Stephen Jones at 2.30pm Crofton Halls, Crofton Rd., Orpington. Enquiries: 0689 32911.

25 October 1990.

National Trust (Orpington & Chislehurst). The National Trust in Cornwall by Mrs. Eileen Beall at 8pm Methodist Church, Sevenoaks Rd., Orpington. Enquiries: 0689 32911.