

Mottingham News

– Autumn 2023 –



Cover : Some of the floral representations of Royal Regalia at the Coronation Flower Festival

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MRA – Who are we? – What are we for? – What have we done? – What can we do next? – How can YOU help?

The Residents' Association, formed in 1932, was and still is a key campaign body protecting the interests of Mottingham's Residents and promoting its activities through Newsletters and via its website www.yourMRA.org. Previous issues of newsletters going back to 1972 can be found in the History section of the website providing a fascinating insight into the development of the area. It seems that much effort was expended discussing antisocial behaviour and unacceptable planning applications, and traffic safety issues; nothing new there then!

Committee meetings are held every two months (except July) in the Methodist Church Hall, and this year's Annual General Meeting was held in May in the Oddfellows Hall in Beaconsfield Road Hall. Councillors for the Mottingham and Chislehurst North Ward (Bromley) and those for Mottingham, Coldharbour and New Eltham Ward (Greenwich) report to committee meetings and contribute to discussion. Meetings are also attended by Police representatives from both boroughs when available.

All our officers are volunteers and rely on the support of local residents. We aim to co-ordinate and provide assistance and information as well as protecting our social and physical environment. We organise decorations for Remembrance and Christmas as well as maintaining longer term installations such as the Village signs.

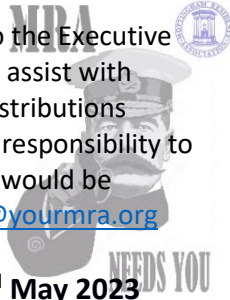
The MRA has (we think) one of the highest levels of resident representation in London and has the respect of local authorities. We still lack active representation from the retail sector. There seems to be little incentive for our local shops to form a collective body, probably due to their small number, and lack of corporate interest such as car parks. Nevertheless, we are grateful to those businesses who faithfully contribute to festive light installations and requests to display posters.

The function of this newsletter is to maintain contact with those residents with less physical and technical agility, and to précis and share the topics and discussions at the Annual General Meeting.

SAVE THE DATE – There will be important constitutional discussion about membership at the AGM on 16th May 2024. Please make every effort to attend

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

We are always ready to welcome local residents (not just owners) to the Executive Committee and we also would like to have another 12 volunteers to assist with distributions to a patch of our community. The job involves 3 or 4 distributions annually, and annual collection of some subs. We try to restrict the responsibility to about 50 homes and to limit the burden on our faithful team. If you would be prepared to undertake one of these areas, please e-mail membsec@yourmra.org



REPORT OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE MRA 3rd May 2023

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Lidl Supermarket has been welcomed as a local source of reduced price supplies. The store opened after a long and tortuous planning process. It was acknowledged that the store was not the first choice of many residents as a replacement for the Porcupine. This did not reflect preference for Waitrose, as erroneously reported in SE9 magazine, but was based on traffic and pedestrian safety grounds. Moving forward, the MRA are keen to encourage Lidl to engage with the local community, and to that end have had a very positive meeting with the area manager and the store manager the day after opening. Lidl kindly agreed to supply most of the food and drinks for the Coronation Flower Festival. They will donate their food bank collections to St Edwards' Church food bank, rather than the Bromley Living food bank, so keeping it local. They expressed keenness to contribute to other local organisations, groups and schools, so the MRA and Lidl will be working together with them on that.

Defibrillators. The MRA under the chairman's leadership has acquired three defibrillators for the benefit of the local population and visitors. Unbelievably thefts have occurred, but insurance supplied replacement devices have been installed, and cabinets are now locked with a keycode which is supplied by London Ambulance Service when needed.

Dorset Road Infant School

The Dorset Road Infant School site is now up for sale by Bromley Council. The proceeds from the sale will be ring fenced for improvements at Elmstead Woods Primary School, which is the now amalgamated school.

Mottingham Library

The Chairman strongly urged members to make use of the excellent facility. The Library offers a wide range of activities, including toddler groups, teenage reading groups, four other reading groups/book clubs, armchair London talks by Chris, CPR training, and access to computers. It is a designated safe and warm place. It is a massive community resource, less like a traditional library, more of a community centre, but if we, the local residents, don't use it in any way, it will be deemed as unused, unnecessary and ripe for closing down. So please, please use it!

TREASURER'S REPORT

Mr Laurie Bell advised that last year's audited accounts, up to 31/03/22, show subscriptions of £1,314. Within this year's accounts, there is income of £1,107 from 2021/22 that came in between 01/04/22 and 30/06/22, making total subscriptions for 2021/22 £2,421.

Subscriptions and some donations of approximately £100, amount to £2,429 for 2022/23. So, there is very little difference between the two years. 'SumUp' has provided unidentifiable income, (subscriptions and donations), of £493. Within this are higher than usual donations. People are invariably rounding up to £5 or £10. In 2022/2. Several road sheets were not completed or returned. So although the subscription income is practically the same as last year, it is from fewer roads. The closing bank balance is £27,507.96 of which £10,400 is ring fenced money from the Royal Borough of Greenwich towards street planters. MRA funds therefore total £17,107.96.

MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY'S REPORT

With the initial onset of COVID, our income stream and data collection were completely debilitated. We realised that to maintain any kind of survival, we would have to have a rethink. We managed to maintain social distancing for our Executive Committee meetings via Zoom and kept the website up to date. The most profound and lasting effects on our way of working relate to our doorstep collection of subscriptions. Planned collections for 2020/21 were classed as socially unacceptable and we did a very belated collection for 2021/22, the remnant of which is reported on this year's accounts. This offered a new option to pay by bank transfer on the membership cards although 83% of the 912 20/21 subs were paid in cash. 150 members opted to pay on line of whom 43 did so. We then looked into the possibilities of adopting new technologies for collection. Card readers were considered impractical to share amongst our many road representatives. A QR code system appeared to offer a suitable safe and secure solution which is economical and simple to use but necessitates use of a smart phone which many members may not use. A drawback of the system is that there is no detail of the subscriber other than a part card number. Thus we have no record of contributor identity or e-mail address for our street records unless they inform us separately. Doorstep collection in person has benefits in data quality and social connection, but there are some road representatives who are put off by the process and the attitude encountered on certain doorsteps.

The ongoing difficulty of voting management at the AGM has now been brought forward in our constitutional debate and will be fully addressed at the 2024 AGM.

Summary	2021-22	2022-23
Cash members:	762	424
On-line paid	43	164
'On-line' option on doorstep	107	191

PLANNING ISSUES

Planning issues of local interest are regularly monitored, with lists posted on the MRA Website. Should you have any concerns about planning issues we suggest you contact our Council representatives. The MRA has expressed opinions on the following issues :

BROMLEY AREA :

LiDL The discharge of the remaining Planning Conditions was welcome, leading to Lidl's opening of their new store in April.

Eltham College – Grove Park Road boundary – Removal of the Cherry Trees was resisted by the MRA but the school were engaging in outlining their proposals and explaining their reasons. New trees are being planted and the old metal railing has now been replaced and looks a lot better. There is welcome improvement in visibility on the corner of Grove Park Road and Mottingham Lane.

Elms, Mottingham Lane MRA has objected to the controversial application to build a large house on the site given the land is designated as Metropolitan Open Land. This has now gone to appeal.

Coach House at the Chantry, Mottingham Lane approved.

33 Devonshire Road MRA recognises that new housing is a priority in the right location and with that in mind it raised comments but despite some pressure remained neutral with regard to the re-application for a pair of semi-detached houses. Consent to the much revised plans was granted by the Council.

Cerises and The Croft in, or just off Mottingham Lane – MRA is currently objecting to both schemes due to scale and bulk leading to a negative impact on surrounding properties.

Eltham College Science department. MRA is pleased to see that works are under way to refurbish and extend.

Capel Manor College, Mottingham Lane. Plans for redevelopment of the site, including increased community aspects, were approved and building appears to have started. The MRA Committee was keenly supportive of the plans which promise continuing and enhanced community contribution.

GREENWICH AREA :

35 Hartsmead HMO conversion – strongly opposed by MRA was turned down by Greenwich. Was again turned down on appeal and owners were instructed to demolish an unauthorised outbuilding.

Garage area between Court Road shops and Porcupine Close – opposed by MRA – approved after modification.

Bridge House on the corner of Crossmead and Court Road. MRA supported local residents by objecting strongly to the proposal which we considered a gross over-development. The original plan was subsequently withdrawn but replaced with what we consider to be an even worse proposal for 32

residential units on the site. Further objections have been lodged.

Several new telecoms masts – MRA objected as the proposed sites were not suitable in our opinion. The number of cabinets that accompany the masts also seem to burgeon with up to 7 causing a significant eyesore and possible pavement obstruction. All of these proposals have so far been refused. MRA did suggest locating one on the open ground along the A20 near King John's Walk where it could be hidden by the trees but nothing has come of this. The latest proposal to erect one by the car park at Mottingham Station was also refused although the MRA did not raise objections.

Garage block on the alleyway behind the shops (numbers 47-73) on **Mottingham Road/Sycamore Close.** MRA Objected – we believe the application has been rejected primarily because of access issues.

Woodmere Fields. Intense and vigorous discussion is taking place around change of use of the horse grazing fields behind Woodmere. The land is Crown Estate property, and following historical legal shenanigans, there is a proposal to instal commercial allotments with contentious provenance. The horses have already been evicted, and residents have concerns about loss of amenities and possible future development. A 2,500 strong petition has been submitted to the Council. [*Google "Roots Allotments" – Ed*]

OTHER PLANNING OF GENERAL INTEREST

PLANES

In early July an application to expand the number of flights from London City



Airport was unanimously rejected by Newham councillors over noise pollution fears. Nine neighbouring councils and four MPs for surrounding areas also opposed the proposals. An application to extend operating hours has been referred to the Planning Inspectorate. London City expects to consult

in 2023 or 2024 on its plans for new flight paths to be linked with London and south east plans in 2025.

Developments can be followed on the HACAN website <https://hacan.org.uk/> with more detailed analysis and comment on www.hacaneast.org.uk

TRAINS

Southeastern Trains introduced their promised timetable changes on 11th December. There was an immediate backlash from customers claiming that services were now 'unreliable' and 'dangerously overcrowded'. There were pictures in the press of serious congestion at London Bridge Station. In response two additional evening commuter services from Cannon Street were instituted by the end of January. In February additional changes were introduced in order to try and address the issues raised, and a further service on the Abbey Wood loop line has recently been added. Timetable updates may be found on the website

<https://www.southeasternrailway.co.uk/travel-information>

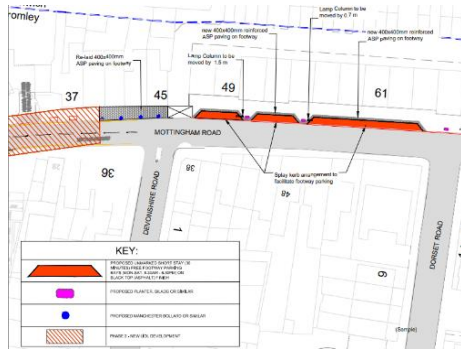
..... and AUTOMOBILES

West Park and **West Hallows** are still under review and discussion along with other access routes to and from the A20. The Greenwich Cabinet Member for traffic has visited the site in person. Discussions tend to be prolonged since control of major routes (including Court Road traffic lights) fall under the jurisdiction of TfL and liaison with local authorities. Bromley authorities are looking at possible traffic calming measures in Grove Park and Court Farm Roads.



Mottingham Road Parking & Planters

P Bromley Council is shortly to embark on installing a revised parking scheme outside the shops. Redevelopment will include substantial planters amongst revised off-carriageway parking for 8 cars similar to that in Eltham High Street. Unfortunately for some, charges will be made via the RingGo app or phone which have suffered critical reviews. Residents may be aware that Greenwich Borough's app of choice is PayByPhone so you will need both on your phone. This will evidently disadvantage members of society with limited or non-existent access to mobile technology.



Planters are being installed by both Bromley and Greenwich councils. We will be directly involved and will be seeking volunteers to assist with ongoing planting and maintenance jobs.

RETAIL ENVIRONMENT

Upgrading of the street scene may have been prompted by the arrival of **LiDL**. New businesses have moved into Court Road and Mottingham Road and several existing ones have undergone refurbishment.

ROCKET & BOW has turned into a microbrewery called **BAT & BALL** – a welcome nod to the local WG Grace heritage. (pic)

BEDROCK CAFÉ Has become a Caribbean street-food outlet **ARAWAK**.

GOOD YEAR'S CHINESE is now **RICE DROP** Sri Lankan cuisine.

RIPPIN INK tattoo studio has rejuvenated as a children's playshop.

D PLATINUM SERVICES now occupy the former **ROOMS** kitchen & bathroom shop.

TAN LINES have replaced **MOTTINGHAM DIY** (*different sorts of paint ! Ed*)

JARMAN & DIXON (Mottingham) PHARMACY, MEM'S CAFÉ, and MOTTINGHAM

SUPERMARKET have all had welcome makeovers.

There are still some sadly empty premises.



LOCAL EVENT REPORTS

CORONATION FLOWER FESTIVAL – Methodist Church Hall



Coronation Festival. A joint effort by the MRA and Mottingham Flower Arrangement Society resulted in the Flower Festival and Community Picnic over the Coronation weekend. Flower arrangements themed on Coronation regalia and colours were created by almost all the members of the Society, with a spectacular central display by a generous National level demonstrator. A hard-working team from the MRA prepared a variety of picnic food, kindly donated by LiDL (BMB)

MOTTINGHAM HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY SHOW – Eltham College



Mottingham Horticultural Society, in conjunction with Mottingham Floral Arrangement Society, held its 60th Autumn Show on Saturday, 26th August at the beautiful location of Eltham College. Visitors were welcomed by the Mottingham Concert Band who played a summer selection including the Floral Dance, Summertime and The Archers

theme tune. There were many exhibitors in adult and junior classes and the hall was bursting with colour. The show was very well attended by local residents who enjoyed looking at the exhibits, taking refreshments, winning on the Tombola and listening to the band. All in all, it was a lovely afternoon and wonderful to see local organisations joining together to hold such an event. We are again grateful to LiDL who provided the judges' lunch. (Marian Lee)



BEWARE THE SCAMMERS – Council Warnings

Bromley Council website has useful information on Scammers and Rogue Traders and allows you to register for trading standard alerts. <https://www.bromley.gov.uk/scams> Advice is also offered on reporting.

NEWS UPDATES

Farewell to Warr's

Have you ever wondered why there is a dropped kerb in front of Warr's showroom ? The site used to be the location of an Express Dairy building with front access for milk floats.



The site was badly damaged by the flying bomb which put paid to Kemp's garage on the BP site. An original building can still be seen at the rear of the property. After repairs, the site was occupied until the early 1980s. Gilbert's Honda Garage owned the site from 1986 to 2000 It was reopened by Warr's in 2003 for the sale and service of Harley Davidson bikes. We will be sorry to see them and their HOG members go in response to current economic pressures. We are particularly grateful for their hosting of the annual Remembrance services.



Defibrillators

Automatic External Cardiac Defibrillators (AEDs)
Local sessions in the use and value of their operation are arranged and held in the library. Anyone interested should email chair@yourmra.org.
Further training sessions will be notified on the MRA website

UPCOMING EVENTS

WAR MEMORIAL REMEMBRANCE SERVICE Sunday 13th Nov

Our grade 2 listed structure will once again be the focus of a Remembrance service coordinated by Churches Together in Mottingham with musical accompaniment by the Mottingham Concert Band. Road closures will be in place between 09:30am and 1:00pm on Sunday 13th November.



FESTIVE LIGHTS

This year's appeal letter is included with this Newsletter. We would encourage residents to support this initiative as generously as they are able.



CHRISTMAS TREES

The MRA will again erect and decorate a tree in the garden of the Methodist Church.

CHILDRENS' CHRISTMAS PAINTING COMPETITION

Look out for this event open to all juniors.

MOTTINGHAM VILLAGE CONCERT BAND - CHRISTMAS CONCERT

Wednesday 13th December 7.30 pm Maryfield Hall – Our Lady Help of Christians Church, Leysdown Road. A selection of seasonal music conducted by Leslie Lake.

MIDWEEK LUNCH – ALL WELCOME

Mottingham Methodist Church Hall – Every Wednesday at 12:30 – Doors open 11:00 for chat and coffee
No need to book - £ 3.00 donation



LIBRARY HIGHLIGHTS The Library is not just books any more !

Phone or visit their website to find out about :

Library fun – Baby Rhyme time –

Stories & craft for children aged 4-8

Sing and Sign with Claire for pre-schoolers

Move-IT interactive game floor with sessions for school-age & pre-school children.

Toddler Time for toddlers 18 months to 3 years and parents and carers.

Games Club : Lego, board games, interactive floor, table tennis.

Saturday Space. New monthly session for children with Autism. For primary school age children. Pre-registration essential.

Friday Friends

Armchair Walks with Chris

020 8857 5406 e-mail : mottingham.library@gll.org



SUBSCRIPTIONS

Most residents will be familiar with our method of collecting membership fees by door-to-door visits from Road Representatives. In the past, residents needed to be present and to have cash available, but an increasing number of people wish to pay their subscriptions by secure on-line systems. We have subscribed to a cashless system with access via QR code to be found on the back of the Newsletter.

OBITUARIES

We have sadly lost two notable West Park residents this year

John Perkins



John and Cathy moved to Mottingham in 1993 and within a few years he was Chairman of MRA (and the Allotment association). As in his professional life, John was always a great believer in fairness and went out of his way to help people who thought they were being treated unfairly.

Among the issues which came up during his time as Chairman was graffiti which appeared in the village – particularly to the north of Court Road. The attendance at the meeting on the subject showed just how much local residents cared about their surroundings and John never forgot that.

During the years of his involvement with the Residents Association John was involved with urging increased police patrols in the Village – particularly to stop the number of youths drinking alcohol in the Street. He was part of the campaign to save Dorset Road Infants School and with his Allotment hat on helped to dig up the Japanese Knotweed threatening to engulf the playground.

He was part of the creation of the Village sign and was most amused at Ross's impersonation of W.G. Grace and posed under the sign disappearing in clouds of smoke as Greenwich Council operatives used noisy equipment to remove the zebra crossing throughout the ceremony.

He was part of the Hands Off Our War Memorial when the council tried to make the surround larger and safer but (fortunately) admitted they were planning to make it look like the roundabout between Mottingham Lane and Court Farm Road with much excess signage.

John found humour in all he did. He was very amused when Greenwich Council planted the wrong trees in West Hallows and it was found they would grow to at least thirty foot and probably block the road. They were removed at his behest but suckers continue to appear to this day.

John retired in 2009 and moved to Suffolk where it was no surprise that within a few months he was Secretary of the Allotment Society and of the Residents Group. He died thirteen years after we left Mottingham but judging by the number of cards and tributes I received, he was obviously not forgotten. (Cathy Perkins)

Tom Biro



Tom was a gentle and learned man with a great understanding and love of people, art and books. He was a valued Road Rep distributing MRA communications. His calming presence will be sorely missed by his family and the Mottingham community.

PAYMENT OF SUBSCRIPTIONS

To pay subs scan the "£3.00 Subs" QR code.

£ 3.00 Subs



Should you feel generous enough to pay more, please scan the "Donate" QR code and Pay the £3.00 plus your donation.

Donate



CASH PAYMENT

Please call or text 07831-739-876 and we will arrange for a representative to call.

BACS transfer may be made to :

Name : Mottingham Residents' Association

Sort code : 20-98-57 **Account No.:** 30666912

If you pay on line – please indicate your house number and postcode as reference.

MOTTINGHAM RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION

CURRENT OFFICERS AND EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OFFICERS

All may be contacted via website

CHAIRMAN	<i>Gail Hodges</i>
TREASURER	<i>Laurie Bell</i>
DEPUTY CHAIRMAN	<i>Richard Mainwaring-Burton</i>
SECRETARY	<i>Lesley Robins</i>
MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY	<i>Richard Mainwaring-Burton</i>
AUDITOR	<i>Bernie Hawes</i>

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBERS :

<i>Sally Bettesworth</i>	<i>Bob Blanks</i>	<i>Carol Borhani</i>	<i>Jane Cornish</i>
<i>Bob Lawrie</i>	<i>James Martin</i>	<i>Graham Soars</i>	<i>Juan Trellez</i>



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