



# BRENTHAM NEWS

ISSUE 172

DISTRIBUTED TO RESIDENTS AND FRIENDS OF BRENTHAM GARDEN SUBURB

AUGUST 2011

## Changes Ahead

There are major changes coming up this autumn as three long-standing Committee members bow out, making way for new people to get involved in both the ongoing and project-based work of the Brentham Society.

I am one of those going, as my three-year term as Chair will be up at the AGM and the constitution very sensibly does not allow re-election for more than three years. Our excellent Secretary, Eleanor Cowie, and former Chair Sue Elliott are also standing down after serving more than two decades between them on both the Brentham Society and the Brentham Heritage Society committees. I shall stay involved as Archivist, leading a small group to prepare our unique archive for its future home as part of Ealing's Local History Library. And I expect Sue and Eleanor will continue to make an invaluable contribution behind the scenes.

But we do need a full-strength Committee of at least nine members representing a range of different skills and experience to carry out our charitable objects and to keep Brentham special. If you care about what happens here and think you can make a positive contribution, please consider standing. There will be an informal evening at 47 Meadvale Road on Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> September [contact Rosanna for details], so come and have a drink and find out more about what's involved – even if you don't think you're 'a committee person', there may be other ways you can help. And this issue describes the current range of things we do – and there's always room for more!

The Brentham Society is lucky to have such talented and dedicated people on the Committee, and I've very much enjoyed working with them, but I believe any organisation needs occasional injections of new blood and new ideas to stay sharp.

That time has now come, so I ask you to nominate someone you think would do a good job (they have to live in Brentham), or consider standing yourself.



The Brentham Society was set up as a residents' and conservation society in 1970, the year after Brentham Garden Suburb was designated a conservation area. Today it aims not only to represent the interests of residents in respect of the total environment of Brentham, but to conserve its unique architectural, environmental and community features.

**Alan Henderson, Chair**



**The Conservation Area Boundary**

## The Brentham Archive

The Brentham Society has a vast archive of material and it has long been an aim to improve both its accessibility and storage for long-term preservation.

Digitisation and storage on the web has been seen as one way to improve the accessibility but finding somewhere to store originals has so far proved difficult.

The Society has had discussions with the London Metropolitan Archive (LMA), the National Archives at Kew and more recently with the local history section of Ealing library.

But before entering into any storage we want to digitise what we have and this will be a major exercise.



We have approximately 40 original architects' coloured plans; 60-70 large black and white photos (some mounted on card); May Day programmes, photos and press cuttings for most years (the earliest being 1922); early publications of *The Brentham Magazine*, *The Brenthamite* and *The Brentham Bulletin* all forerunners to *Brentham News*; a huge number of photographs covering a range of Brentham events over the years; details of original tenancy "rules" and agreements; and a sizeable collection of residents' memories.

A number of items from the collection were used in the Brentham Book – *A History of the Pioneer Garden Suburb: 1901 – 2001* and the Brentham Club has recently selected a number of items to display as part of their centenary celebrations.

A small group of volunteers is currently indexing the photos with a view to deciding which to digitize, but any additional help on the project would be gratefully received. If you have any experience of archiving, web design or just want to help please get in touch.

## The Letchworth Festival

Brentham took its place as a small but significant member of the Garden City family in Letchworth's recent centenary celebrations - *Letchworth: Who Do You Think You Are?* - on 2nd & 3rd July. We had a Brentham stall in a marquee on the history of the movement, alongside representatives from some of its best-known products including Bournville, Hampstead and Harlow.



Despite competing attractions in the nearby fairground, a steady stream of visitors came to find out more about Brentham, usually opening the conversation with 'We've never heard of you!' Well, now they know!

## A Profile of Brentham 100 Years Ago



Did you complete a census form in April this year?

In 1911 Brentham was still under construction – nevertheless there were 314 household census returns.

Have you ever wondered who lived in your house 100 years ago? Now you can find out by researching the 1911 census on-line.

If you are interested in helping to compile a picture of the first residents of Brentham, where they came from and what work they did, please make contact.

Planning decisions in the Brentham Conservation Area (CA) are informed by the Brentham Garden Estate CA Character Appraisal and Management Plan 2008, and Brentham Garden Estate CA Policy and Design Guide 1988.



**Conservation Area Management Plan**

and

**Conservation Area Character Appraisal**

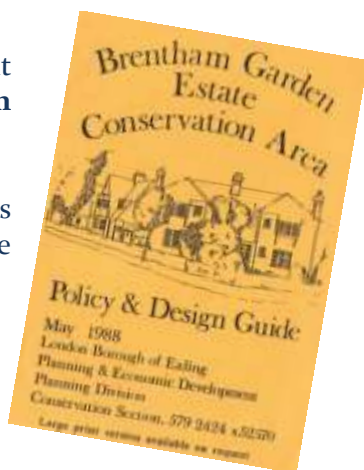
Copies available on the Ealing Council website [www.ealing.gov.uk](http://www.ealing.gov.uk) – follow the links to planning / conservation / conservation areas / Brentham Garden Estate

Although dated 1988 the Brentham Garden Estate CA Policy and Design Guide is still a valid and useful document. It is used by the planners to inform decisions about development in our conservation area. The Brentham Society is in the process of reproducing it in digital form so that it can be available on the Brentham website.

The most recent **Policy and Design Guide** is out of print.

The Society has copies which can be consulted on request.

Contact:  
Heather Moore



Over the years the Brentham Society has collected additional useful information, which we intend to produce as our own guide to design in Brentham. We hope this will be useful to residents who wish to reinstate original features or make appropriate alterations to their properties. It will be an ‘in-house’ document giving advice but its guidance will have no legal weight.

**Council Change of Heart**

Ealing Council has withdrawn proposals to stop telling neighbours by post of planning applications which might affect them, and rely on noticeboards instead.

The move would have come about through a change to Ealing's Statement of Community Involvement (SCI). A revised SCI was put out to consultation last year, and this proposal was strongly opposed by all who responded – including the Brentham Society.

**Planning Application Withdrawn**

A planning application to install additional telecoms cabinets along Pitshanger Lane between Woodfield Road and Woodfield Avenue has been withdrawn following strong letters of objection from the Brentham Society and a number of local residents. However BT has already submitted some new applications and these may turn out to have at least as much adverse impact. After pressure from the Civic Society, the Council has set up a meeting with BT's agents and Brentham will be able to make its views known directly to them.

**Ward Forum Funding**

Last year we were successful in obtaining funding from the Ward Forums (Hanger Hill and Cleveland) to assist with installation of heritage lamps on the two footpaths on the estate. The work is now complete and the lamps painted in original livery green and cream.

This year we have been successful in getting funding from Hanger Hill Ward to assist us in reinstating/refurbishing some street signs like the one shown.



This is a project which will roll on into the coming year.



**Unsightly Litter**

Please don't use the public litter bins at places like Vivian Green for disposal of domestic rubbish. The foxes love it but someone has to clean it up!



## A Reflection on the Field Oaks of Brentham

What is it about Brentham that draws people here and makes them so reluctant to move away? The architecture? The gardens? Or perhaps it is the trees? Some were here long before Brentham Garden Suburb was ever thought about. They are the original field trees - mainly English oaks - already hundreds of years old when Henry Vivian started building Brentham at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Instead of felling them the builders built around them so that today you can't fail to be aware of the presence of these giant trees: glimpsed between two terraces, softening the view across allotments to the street behind, or standing majestically in the centre of Denison - Ludlow Green (below).



Generations of residents have been able to enjoy the benefits of such mature trees, the wildlife they host, the shade they provide in the heat of summer, and the oxygen they pump into our polluted air.

No wonder the Co-partnership Movement that inspired the estate chose the English oak for its logo. Today this has been adapted by the Brentham Society and can be seen on the cover of the 'Living in Brentham Garden Suburb' pack.

The great age and size of these trees gives us pause for thought about our own place in the order of things. How much longer will they be here? Do we own them? They may be on land we own, and that brings responsibilities for their care and protection. But in a wider sense we don't own them. They were here long before us and will, with care, outlive us to give pleasure to future generations and provide a home for the creatures that enrich our experience of living here so much. If we take this wider, longer-term perspective, it is surely our duty to ensure that these venerable oaks remain a living, iconic symbol of Brentham for as long as possible.

*This reflection was written after recently learning that an 'Application for Tree Works' to fell the oak on the green between Ludlow Road and Denison Road had been made to Ealing Council in April. Permission was refused and a temporary Tree Preservation Order (TPO) placed on the tree. The Brentham Society's concern - in common with the many residents who now own the green - is to secure the future of this magnificent tree as an amenity and an inspiration to all who live here.*

### New Trees

Many thanks go to Ealing Council who in the spring planted several new street trees in Brentham. Most seem to be thriving and the recent wet weather is helping them to stay alive. If you have a new tree outside your property please remember, in a dry spell, that it would appreciate some water through the pipe placed alongside its trunk.

### Vandalism

Sadly, two newly planted silver birches have been the victims of vandalism. The main growing shoot has been cut. This will have a very detrimental effect on the shape of the tree - instead of being tall and slender with thin foliage through which light can pass it will be stunted and grow wide with dense foliage. If anyone can help to identify the vandals



please contact the Brentham Society and the arboricultural department of Ealing Council. The trees are planted for the enjoyment of all residents and funded from our council tax.

## Who Stole the Union Jack?

Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> June was an historic day at the Brentham Club. A plaque to Fred Perry, the last men's Wimbledon Champion, was unveiled on the front wall of the Club. Fred grew up on the Brentham Estate and learnt his tennis at the Club.



Besides Peter Crouch, Mike Brearley and Graeme Barlow, Fred was the most famous sportsman to emerge from the ranks of the many sports players at the Club. A cup on display showed that Fred won the men's tennis

championship at the Club in 1926 and 1927.

All had been prepared – a tennis tournament featuring players dressed in Edwardian costume, a junior tennis tournament, and a barbecue. Distinguished guests included the Mayor of Ealing, the Chief Executive of the LTA, Councillors and Angie Bray MP.

The obvious problem was the weather. It rained all morning and a brief sunny period at noon was followed by a further downpour. Amazingly, by 5 pm as the guests began to appear there was blue sky and the ladies in their Edwardian outfits were playing with their suave partners on the grass courts. The plaque was safely hidden behind a Union Jack awaiting the unveiling. We had beaten the weather!



But it had one last trick to play. Five minutes before the ceremony a mischievous gust of wind swept the Union Jack away, leaving the plaque open to view with Roma the Club Manager chasing the errant flag down Meadvale Road.

And so a rather unusual “virtual unveiling” took place – but at least it was memorable – as was the barbecue that followed.

*The plaque commissioned jointly by the Brentham Society, Ealing Civic Society and the Brentham Club was funded by the Ward Forum.*

**John Kinder: Brentham Club Chairman**

## Brentham Open Gardens Day

OK, confession time, who got their rain dance timing wrong? After weeks of gardeners praying for the wet stuff it decided to deluge this year's Open Gardens Day. Such a shame when everyone had gone to such efforts to make their green retreats worthy of Chelsea Gold.

Despite the downpours the variety of gardens combined with the warm welcome from each of their green-fingered owners made for such an interesting afternoon. For all their differences what united the gardens were their strong themes – from cottage garden planting to modern courtyards, from the Mediterranean-inspired to the currently fashionable, but always with the traditional Brentham potager arrangements – this year's open day had them all. Ten gardens in total threw open their gates with two new horticultural treats this year, so many thanks to the hosts and to the Brentham Garden Groups for organising the day.



*(Mike Gaunt)*

Sally Kelly's plant sale was super: where else can you admire a beautiful plant in situ and then walk two metres and buy it for £1? The tea and cakes at 26 Holyoake Walk, enjoyed under gazebos and in the summerhouse rather than in the sun this year, were scrummy as ever, with the Ukrainian walnut cake and Jamie's special chocolate cake going like... well, hot cakes. Fingers crossed next year for the good weather that has graced the gardens in previous years so we can all enjoy the views without wellies and brollies!

*The Open Gardens Day raised £933.20 for the Brain Tumour UK charity.*

*If you'd like to get involved in next year's event please contact*

*Gina Jenkins: [reginajenkins@hotmail.com](mailto:reginajenkins@hotmail.com)*

**Lyndsay Haywood**



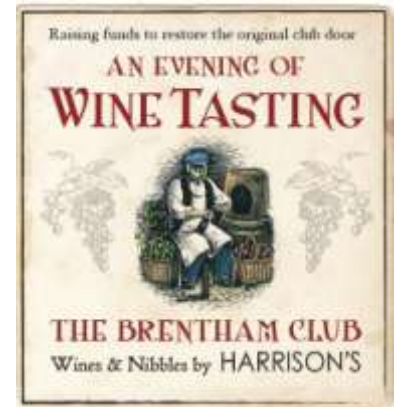


Heather Moore with Deputy Mayor and Mayoress at this year's **Strawberry Tea** in Barbara Murray's garden.

A VERY BIG THANK YOU to all who helped in any way with the strawberry tea. Lots of preparation but it all came together well and those who attended had a thoroughly enjoyable afternoon – and it didn't rain!



All dressed up for this year's **Brentham May Day parade**



The **wine tasting event** raised over **£260** towards the cost of a new Brentham Club door in keeping with the original design.

### School Visits

Three groups of schoolchildren had guided tours of Brentham in June / July, two classes from St Benedict's Junior department and one group of pupils from North Ealing and Brentside Schools. All the pupils seemed to enjoy their visits and showed great interest in the history and architecture of our estate.

Published by the Brentham Society

You can contribute to *Brentham News* by emailing [news@brentham.com](mailto:news@brentham.com)  
or by writing to the Editor

Another edition is due out later this year

