



Brentham Garden Estate, Ealing

NEWS

*This version of Brentham News has been adapted for the Brentham website.
Private telephone numbers and addresses and commercial ads have been deleted.*

In this Issue

Brentham
Residents' Survey

Brentham & the
Environment:
another survey

Planning – more of
your questions and
answers

Brenthamites visit
Bedford Park

Brentham in the
Snow

Over the Garden
Hedge

Pioneers meeting
room restored

Brentham Heritage
Society – update

Brenthamites
Reunited

Gardening Corner

Notices



We're now well into the season where Brentham looks its best and we celebrate the big community event of the year, May Day. After a couple of years without musical accompaniment (though Bevan Jones and Sam Sender did wonders with an old drum and a cornet last year!) we expect the Boys Brigade to be back in pole position to lead the procession in the traditional way. We shall be on gazebo duty on Vivian Green with the Brentham Society stand, so drop by and see us.

Nearly 200 survey responses - about a third of Brentham households – have been returned and are now being analysed (see pg 2). This is a higher response than for the last survey, done about six or seven years ago, and it will be interesting to compare results. Thank you to everyone who has taken the trouble (some in considerable detail) to let us know your views. This will help us determine project priorities for both the Brentham Society and the Brentham Heritage Society and it also alerts us to the things you are most concerned about on the estate. Unsurprisingly, rubbish and traffic loom large, with planning close behind. We'll publish the results in the pre-AGM newsletter in early autumn. Your comments and suggestions on the Club's facilities will also be passed on to their management committee.

Relationships with the PCA and the Brentham Club are building, and we want to work together on a joint family-orientated event, but finding a space to fit this in between the Club's planned Summer Ball, Party in the Park, May Day, Garden Day, the Strawberry Tea and various other Brentham events is proving tricky. Got ideas for an event? Willing to help? Get in touch. In the meantime, enjoy early summer in Brentham and everything it has to offer.

Sue Elliott
Chair Brentham Society

The Brentham Residents' Survey

I moved to the Brentham Estate in the summer of 2002, the buying and selling process having taken almost a year to run its course. The Brentham "Welcome Pack" arrived through my door soon after and within a few weeks I'd been invited to a new residents' evening at the home of one of my neighbours. The aim of the meeting was to find out more about the Brentham Society and the Brentham Heritage Society.

I was impressed by the individuals I met who had obviously made a serious commitment to ensuring the unique character of the area remained. They achieve this by upholding Brentham traditions and protecting the suburb from unwelcome development. Having moved from a part of London where I had seen the identity of the architecture and sense of community eroded by careless planning decisions I felt encouraged that there was a real determination to retain Brentham's character, the essence of which has attracted so many of us to make our homes here.

At that first meeting I was interested to find out how the work of both societies represented the needs of *Brenthamites*, which led to a discussion on the merits of a residents' survey. The key objective being to ensure that the societies' work was in line with the expectations and requirements of the local community. With this in mind I offered to help the committee with design, implementation and analysis of the questionnaire.

The response has been fantastic with almost one third of all households on the estate making the time and effort to provide feedback. As a new arrival

in the area it encourages me to see such positive comments and useful suggestions as to how both the Brentham Society and the Brentham Heritage Society can more accurately organise events that reflect the interests of those of us who are fortunate enough to live here.

I will be undertaking a full analysis of the questionnaires in the near future and will present the findings in the next newsletter. I for one am certainly looking forward to living here for many years to come. I am in total agreement with the comments of one respondent who suggests that Brentham is a "secluded, quiet and beautiful retreat from the noisy world" I also echo her closing remarks - "How lucky we are!"

Trevor Skelton

Thanks too, to those who supplied contact details and email addresses. We'd very much like to emulate the very efficient email contact system that the Pitshanger Community Association has with its members.

If you haven't returned your questionnaire there is still time to pop it through Trevor Skelton's door – but be quick.

And finally – apologies to those friends of Brentham who thought we'd forgotten to include a questionnaire with their last newsletter – it was a deliberate decision to only survey residents – sorry if we didn't make that clear.

See next Brentham News
for a full analysis of survey returns

Brentham and the Environment:another survey

You may be aware that Britain is a signatory to the Kyoto Agreement that commits the European Union to reducing its Carbon emissions on 1990 levels by 5% by 2010 and 8% by 2015. The construction industry has a huge part to play with new buildings and this is progressing but what is sometimes forgotten is that half of this reduction is sought from existing buildings, mainly housing. New building regulations only go part of the way and in any case will only apply where building works are undertaken. To meet the targets some additional voluntary methods are surely needed.

My name is Wayne Parr and most of you will have received some 'nuisance' mail from me recently in the form of a questionnaire seeking information in support of my academic work. Those of you who haven't, don't worry, I'll be delivering them before the end of May with an accompanying letter describing the background.

Response to date has been very encouraging – thank you – and you may be wondering what I'm going to do with the information. Apart from assuring you that this will be kept very discreet, the answer is ...*I'm not really sure!* In truth it is yet to be defined but being an architect on an architecture course with such interesting architectural fabric in Brentham, then the project in my opinion must be about the built environment.

I don't want to be premature in any proposals and Pat Baxendale of the

Brentham Garden Estate Conservation Area Advisory Panel has correctly advised caution in presenting ideas because of the Conservation aspects of the Estate. It is very interesting to an architect that relaxations in building controls have been possible. However it is the whole nature of Brentham that presents the challenge. The Conservation issues, the 'artisan' demeanour of the accommodation, Brentham's establishment prior to any public environmental awareness, all suggest that if a way ahead can be found here, then other locales might follow.

I firmly believe that an Estate-wide objective in energy efficiency rather than individual house/resident approaches could produce results. The next part of the project could include meeting with The Brentham Society and the Local Authority to establish a framework whereby energy saving measures might be adopted at Brentham, in a planned way with minimum impact on its environment and with economic benefit to the residents. Ultimately this could lead to a blueprint that could be applied to other housing areas whose physical characteristics are less complex.

I remain mindful of those who established Brentham and think they would rise to such an opportunity. Ultimately, to maintain our living conditions and help save the planet we may need to allow some compromises into our way of life before they are forced upon us.

For further information or another copy of the questionnaire – contact:

Wayne Parr Dip Arch RIBA
wayne@pelta.co.uk

Planning – more of your Questions & Answers

As the weather improves and the days lengthen, the Brentham Society and the Conservation Advisory Panel start to field more questions about exterior maintenance and conservation requirements. Here are some of the queries that new residents have made.

Do I need planning permission to change the colour of my front door?

No, you may paint front doors and front gates any colour so there is no need to apply for planning permission.

My brickwork is flaking or messy, may I paint it with brick coloured paint?

No. To paint any bare brickwork will need a planning application and this will almost certainly be refused. The soft colour variation in the hand-made bricks and pointing are considered part of the character of the estate. Brickwork can be cleaned, repaired and re-pointed without planning permission so long as you do not alter the original appearance. Decorators often use brick and tile paint to “tidy up” the house and to hide careless splashes. Painted bricks and tiles have been the subjects of enforcement orders so do make sure before the work starts that decorators understand that these areas must remain unpainted. As brick and tile paint recently appeared on an estate agent’s list of “ways of lowering the value of your home” it may be worthwhile taking advice on the removal of previously applied red paint.

Why did the Conservation Officer say that the tile creasing above the windows and elsewhere on the cottage should remain unpainted?

The ends of the red tiles add definition and interest to the elevations and are features of Brentham architecture. They can be cleaned with a wire brush and re-pointed without planning permission.

While repairing the roof my builder said that the chimney was dangerous and should be taken down immediately. Can I do this without planning permission?

You may be allowed to start the work before an application is processed, but the council must be informed before the works starts, and made aware that you are in an Article 4 conservation area. The Council will send out an officer who will confirm that the work is urgent within four days. This is a useful system as it stops unscrupulous contractors from frightening people into expensive work. You will be required to rebuild the chimney, so it is wise to keep the bricks as this can save you money. If your builder tries to discourage you from contacting the Council s/he may know that demolishing the chimney is not really necessary.

Lots about fencing and hedges

Do not make any changes to a boundary without planning permission, but dead or diseased hedge shrubs can be replaced with new plants, as this is, in effect, a repair. Hedges cannot be replaced by close boarded fences.

All the above points apply to the rear and sides of houses as well as the fronts. If you feel uncertain about any of these or any other planning issue contact:

**Pat Baxendale or
Heather Moore**

who may not be able to give a definitive answer to “will I get permission for?” but will be able to tell you if you need to make an application and how best to go about it.

Brentham Party visits Bedford Park

On Sunday 30th March, a group of 15 Brenthamites visited Bedford Park in Chiswick for a guided walk. John Scott, a local architect and historian, hosted us. After a short introduction in St Michael and All Angels Church on Turnham Green, the group made a regal progress around the estate, stopping to examine items of interest along the way.



Some of the houses have attractive "Dutch" wall plaques featuring pots of flowers

Bedford Park claims to be the first garden suburb, but this is not strictly true, as the term was coined about ten years after the building of Bedford Park began. It was built speculatively, targeted mostly at artists and similar professions moving out of Kensington and Chelsea. The owner of the land, John Carr, commissioned a succession of architects, including Goodwin, Shaw and May, and the different

characteristics of the architects' designs can be seen throughout the estate. The first houses were built on land owned by Carr's father-in-law, and more land was added as time went on.



Like Brentham, corner sites are given special treatment

The houses are generally on a grander scale than Brentham (we can only dream of three storeys), and many houses were modified during construction to meet the demands of individual buyers. The main characteristics are the white wooden railings and the red bricks with white detail, which led to the description of the estate as 'all blood and bandages'.

Following the tour, the group retired to the local pub, The Tabard Inn (to admire the original features of course).

Sophie Costella

Read about our next visit, to Bournville, in the next edition of Brentham News.

Brentham in the Snow

Just as we went to press with the February edition of Brentham News, Brentham experienced its heaviest snowfall for a number of years. Here are a few images.



At the junction of Brentham Way and Fowlers Walk.

One of the distinctive Brentham Notice Boards around the estate



A snowman stands guard in Winscombe Crescent



Looking South East over Vivian Green. Only a couple of days later a mass of yellow daffodils, planted by Brentham Society members last September, began to appear bringing the first sight of Spring.



Looking North down Denison Road, the Brentham Club tower looks splendid in the bright sunshine.



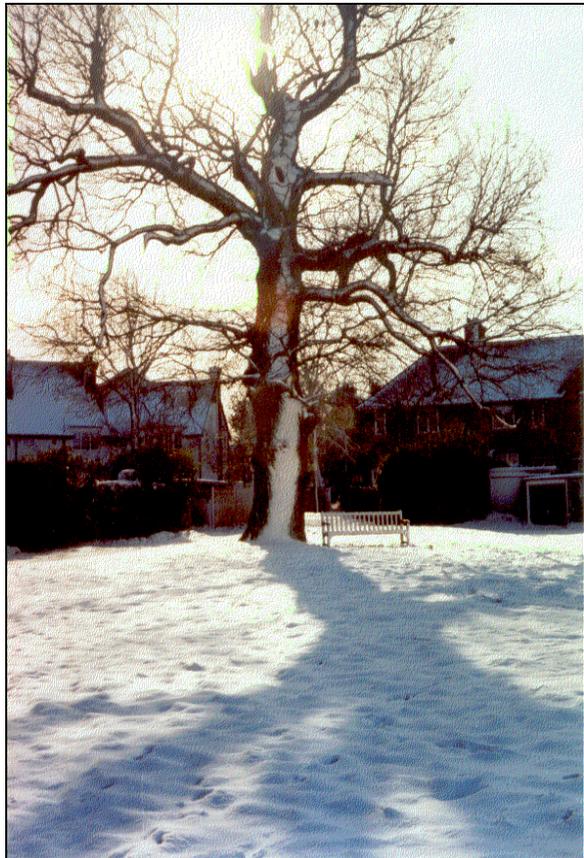
Do you have any favourite photos of Brentham you'd like to share? Send them to the Editor and we'll publish a selection.



The cul-de-sac Fowlers Walk

The ancient oak on Ludlow/Denison Green.

The seat is a new edition and will shortly be dedicated to the memory of Brentham resident David Graves.



Bill & Brentham !

Spot them during the open gardens event on Sunday 13th July

OVER THE GARDEN HEDGE

News, views and gossip

All Quizzed Out

Ealing MP Steve Pound, wife Maggie and guests made a spirited attempt at the Brain of Brentham title recently, joining Society supremo Sue Elliott as part of her specially selected team of quiz-hardened general knowledge specialists.



Sue's Team at the Quiz night

Steve kept everyone entertained with topical asides about political colleagues Robin Cook and Clare Short, but the Brentham/Westminster team were no match for those serious quizzers from the Club and Pitshanger Bookshop who swept to first and second places, leaving our Chair's team a disappointing seventh out of ten tables. But the evening was yet young for Steve and party, who left undaunted at 11pm to go on to a 40th birthday party in Acton. Who says Labour has run out of steam?

Here's a tip



Best survey suggestion so far for "Things People Would Like to See in Brentham News". Racing tips!

[Hmmm. Not a bad idea... Ed.]

Man of Property?

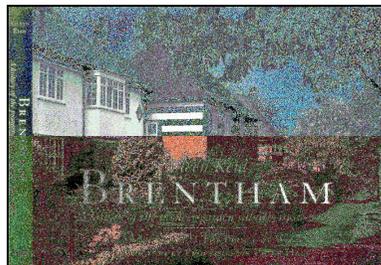
Does a new career in estate agency beckon for our esteemed Editor? Interest generated by the house-swap small ad in the last edition prompted a frenzy of activity, introducing prospective swappers to the vendor. However we hear the property is still on the market but the vendor has met some really nice Brenthamites.

Up For Sale

Still on property, we hear that Holyoake House is about to be sold by BPT to a property investment company. Tidying up is about to start on the grounds and the overgrown yew trees in the front of the building lopped to a more manageable size. Whether the change of ownership will be A Good Thing remains to be seen. The BHS and the BS will be watching the fate of this key building closely.

Sublime Suburbs

This new series on ITV1 due to start on Thursday 22 May at 7.30pm (hard luck if you're an EastEnders fan) about London suburbs sounds one to watch. The producers, Clementine Productions, promise to consider featuring Brentham if there's a second series.



Copies are still available from
The Pitshanger Bookshop or direct
from the Brentham Heritage Society
(£25+£4 p&p – cheques to BHS)

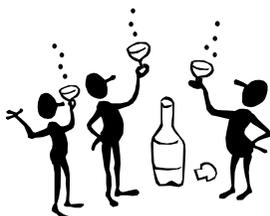
Pioneers' first meeting place restored to former glory

As a result of the intervention of the Brentham Heritage Society almost two years ago, The Haven Arms in Haven Lane now has a very nicely restored function room as part of its recent refurbishment programme. But it's not just any old function room: this is where we believe Henry Vivian and the Brentham 'pioneers' met in the early months of 1901 to establish Brentham Garden Suburb.

Over the years the first floor room in a former stable block had fallen into a dangerous state of semi-dereliction with a perilously rotten staircase and ivy growing in at the open spaces where windows once were. Now it has been returned to late Victorian grandeur, with its panelling and original fireplaces restored and other contemporary fittings replaced. The only concession to the 21st century is thick pile fitted carpet. It's a very pleasant space for a meeting or small function and is available for hire, though at the moment there are weekend and evening restrictions on its use, which seems a pity.

We're grateful to Chris and John for putting up with months of planning delay as a result of our intervention and being supportive of our wish to see the room restored. They now have a very nice non-smoking dining room and a good sitting out area too.

Look out for details of an inaugural Brentham function there in the summer months



What has the Brentham Heritage Society been up to?

- ⇒ Filing all archive photos ready for professional indexing. We want to turn the best into postcards for sale. Is there a design/print person out there willing to take this on as a project?
- ⇒ Updating the Brentham website with new info and links. Check it out at: www.brentham.com
- ⇒ Plans for a 'virtual tour' of the estate, perhaps with help from a local secondary school.
- ⇒ Dealing with requests for the Brentham book from far-flung places – Japan is the latest.
- ⇒ Promoting May Day - did you see Chair Wendy Sender's article in *The Green*?

Brenthamites Reunited

Another success story – following an article in the last edition of Brentham News, we've been able to put Betty Black (née Ridley) in contact with her lost friend Mary Godfrey (née Copestake). We look forward to hearing how they got on having not been in touch for 50 years.



Thanks to Mary for this early 1930's MayDay photo of herself (on the left) with brother Harold and sister Audrey.

Gardening Corner



Honey Fungus Alert

Our privet hedges are continuing to succumb to this incurable fungal infection and it is causing some concern. Our living hedges are a very attractive feature of the estate (and under conservation regulations cannot be removed). The gardening group have decided to investigate the problem and will report back in the next newsletter. In the meantime if anybody is concerned about die-back in their privet then ring me and I can pass on the latest advice.

Maureen McCarthy

BBC Radio 4 Gardeners' Question Time

The Brentham Gardening Group, in association with B.A.G.S. (Brentham Allotments and Gardens Society) has applied to the BBC to host a future edition of this venerable radio series. Over many decades, *Gardeners' Question Time* has travelled to horticultural societies and gardening clubs all over the UK, dealing with queries about everything from rose-growing to Rhizome Rot. Though there's a long waiting list, we hope they might choose to visit Brentham in the not too distant future. *(Perhaps then we'll find out direct from the experts how to get rid of Honey Fungus? Ed.)*

Endangered Species

At about this time last year I found a magnificent black and bronze coloured Stag Beetle in my back garden. The Stag Beetle is the largest land living beetle in Britain, males can be up to 70mm (2.5") long

and is so-called because the males huge jaws look like a stag's antlers. Stag beetles are quite harmless, but the female may give you a nip if you put your fingers in the wrong place.

It seems that stag beetles can breed in almost any type of wood provided that it is in a sufficient state of decay. Larvae have been spotted in everything from oak and elm stumps to the roots of dead lilac bushes and privet hedges. Old fruit trees are particularly valuable. Evergreen trees and bushes also seem to provide important daytime cover from predators. But though the stag beetle has clearly adapted well to urban living, it nevertheless is in serious decline and is now on the endangered species list. Part of this decline is thought to be the over tidy garden. So as well as keeping a look out for stag beetles, the best way to help them in your garden is to create log piles and leave old tree stumps in place.

Whilst on the topic of endangered species, those of us who have lived on this estate for several decades must have noticed the decline of Hedgehogs, Frogs, Sparrows, Bats, Thrushes and Blackbirds, I used to be able to pick out the different blackbirds song, but I did not hear one blackbird last year and I have not even seen a thrush in the past five or six years. The last time I saw a bat at twilight was about three years ago. Now I know that these creatures are not on the endangered species list, but we should all be aware that with or without clear and precise manufacturers instructions on slug pellets and chemical garden sprays, these items if not outright killers of wild life, they most certainly do not do

our wild life (or our small children) any good at all. **Moirra Millerick**

Garden Competition

Don't forget that garden awards are announced each year at the AGM. All front gardens are eligible and judges have already been around to select best "Spring" garden – but there's still time for you to spend in the garden before the best "Summer" garden is chosen. Good luck.

A Heron's Story

Late last year I was walking along the path skirting the allotments to the north of Brunswick Road when I noticed something unusual in the sky coming over from Horsenden Hill. It was a heron and looked very majestic as it purposefully made its way south.

But I was not alone in spotting it. The crows who nest in the trees on the Ealing Golf Club boundary spotted him as well and they did not take kindly to his presence. Like military aircraft they harried him by dive-bombing. He was clearly troubled and tried frequently to change direction in order to shake them off but the crows, five or six at this time, would have none of it.



I had now reached the bottom of Brentham Way and the Heron had been forced much lower by his

attackers. With one more concerted crow attack he was down to roof height and still they continued. He wasn't able to climb and disappeared to land somewhere between Brentham Way and Brunner Road.

So - if a large heron suddenly appeared in your garden last October this was his story.

More recently I have spotted a very similar heron in Brentham Meadow feasting on the frogs in the fenced off pond. Could this be the very same bird? **Barry Murphy**

Obituaries

It is with sadness that we have to report the deaths of two long-term Brentham residents.

Betty Moorcroft who had lived on the estate in Meadvale Road all her life, died earlier this year at the age of 80. Betty and her late husband were active members of Brentham Club and for a number of years organised the annual May Day parades. Betty had kindly donated a number of photos and programmes to the Brentham archive and had given us a number of contacts during our research for the Brentham Book.

Bernard Follett of Denison Road also died earlier this year. As an Ealing shopkeeper for many years he was well known in the area. People may also remember him as always sweeping away leaves at 7am on Sunday mornings. Bernard's grandson and wife have recently moved into his house in Denison Road and we welcome them to the estate.

The Brentham Society sends its condolences to the families of these two well-known residents.

Brain of Brentham Raises £350 for Castlebar School.

All had a good time and there was a real community spirit feel to the evening. Thanks to Hanwell & Northfields Rotary Club who devised the questions, to the Brentham Club for hosting, and to Barry Murphy for organising the event. For those 20 disappointed brains on the waiting list for tickets – you need to be quicker off the mark next time!

Plant Sale raises £212 for Volunteer Reading Help charity

Thanks to all of you who came to the plant sale held on a lovely sunny Sunday afternoon at the end of March. Sally was so pleased with the response she hopes to make this an annual event.

Still to come in 2003

(watch for details on notice boards)

May Day (17th May)

 **Family Cycle**  (15th June)

Strawberry Tea (22nd June)

Garden Day (13th July)

London Open House Weekend

Saturday/Sunday 20th/21st September

Letchworth visit (27th September)

Annual General Meeting (16th October)

Autumn Craft Fair (15th November)

Carol Singing (December TBC)

Open Gardens

Following the continued success of what is now becoming an annual event, we aim to have a number of Brentham Gardens open for you to visit on Sunday 13th July. We're always keen to have some new gardens, as well as some regular favourites, on the itinerary and if you'd like to open your garden this year we'd love to hear from you. **8991-1931**

Family Cycle

Join this annual event for all ages. Cycle mostly on off-road paths to Osterley Park for a well earned cream tea. Meet from 1-00pm at gates to Pitshanger Park on Sunday 15th June. We leave at 1-30pm prompt. For further detail:

Alan Henderson

And finally -

Outstanding Membership Subscriptions 2003

If you are an existing member, or new resident who would like to join the Brentham Society, and you have not already paid your 2003 subscription, please return this to your membership collector as soon as possible or alternatively, subscriptions can be paid direct to me.

The membership subscription for 2003 remains £2, which I hope you agree, is excellent value for money, but (as always) larger donations are much appreciated and put to good use.

Please remember to put your name and address on the envelope enclosing your subscription to enable us to make up your membership card. Thank you for your support.

Sean Cadogan (Membership Secretary)