



Brentham Garden Estate, Ealing

# BRENTHAM NEWS ISSUE 154 JUNE 2005

(Distributed to residents and friends of Brentham)

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

## Brentham Society Chair's Notes

Summer is the season which sees most of Brentham's regular activities - May Day, the Open Garden Day, and the Strawberry Tea. By the time you read this, the first one will already be over, but I hope support for the other events will continue to be good notwithstanding our unpredictable weather.

What is not always realised is that the May Day event is not organised by the Brentham Society, but by a small band of dedicated helpers who form an *ad hoc* if semi-permanent committee. Getting the show on the road - literally - is a regular battle against other unpredictable hazards, and this year has had more than its fair share. The unfortunate accident to Geoff Baxendale, referred to elsewhere in this edition of *News*, meant an even greater load fell on the remaining volunteers. We owe them a significant debt of gratitude.

Next year sees the centenary of the traditional procession and maypole dancing. The committee wants to mark the event with appropriate Edwardian panache, but will need help more than ever. Now is the time to offer your assistance, not just for the day but in planning well in advance. The BS Committee will be looking at what it can do as well, but there is no substitute for new and enthusiastic volunteers; please contact Pat Chapman, ☎ 8998 0520.

The next big item to claim our attention will be the proposals for the Brentham Club regeneration. We still have no firm indication of when we can expect to see hard plans, but the Committee will be keeping you informed on what is happening as soon as we know. In the meantime, we will be kept busy on the ever-present need to be vigilant for the Brentham environment, and working with the Council Conservation Officers in their task of protecting and enhancing the character of the conservation area.

*Tony Miller*

## Don't choke your front garden!

Where once front gardens were a source of green delight and householder pride, today they're more likely to be considered a nuisance to maintain or a good place to park your car off the road. Though there are planning restrictions on Brentham about off-street parking, and the annual Garden Awards prove that pride in front gardens is still very much alive, you only have to walk along Brunswick Road to see how this development has destroyed the look of a once pleasant thoroughfare.

There is a growing awareness that hard surfacing of front gardens not only damages the look of a street, it can have a serious environment impact too - increasing rain run-off into already over-stretched drains, absorbing more heat and less noise and dust from the street, as well as safety hazards caused by cars crossing pavements.

Local environmental group LA21, together with Ealing Environmental Health Department, are carrying out a survey in the borough to measure the extent of hard surfacing. I volunteered to survey the 207 houses in Brunswick Road for the project and found - alongside some pretty and well-tended front gardens - a significant proportion that were more than 80% hard-surfaced, and many of these 100% covered. We'll report back on the LA21 findings when their report is published later this year.

*Sue Elliott*

## Lime Trees



Brentham is one of those areas which have a large proportion of the Borough's lime trees, and they contribute much of its character. So the proposal in the Council's original budget for 2005/6 to remove all of them over a three-year period aroused a high level of controversy.

Most people will now know that, following vigorous protests by Ealing Save the Trees campaign and opposition Councillors, particularly Nigel Sumner, Ealing Council denied that there was ever such an intention, and announced that "*The business plan didn't stack up and we will now be only carrying out regular maintenance work on our lime trees*". This means that each incident involving damage by tree roots and complaints from residents will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis. A promise has also been given that any future general plan to remove trees will be subject to consultation through Area Committees and local residents' associations.

Apart from the need to keep a constant eye on what the Council is up to, what the incident has revealed is that many residents do believe that limes can be a nuisance as well as an environmental benefit. Where there are genuine reasons for removing specific trees that are causing damage, the Committee would like to know about it as part of a general review we are hoping to conduct of trees in Brentham.

Tony Miller

### The Brentham Photographic Survey 2004

*What is it?* A collection of digital photographs of every single property in the Brentham Garden Suburb Conservation Area. The survey has been copied on to DVD and is held by the Brentham Archive (contact Alan Henderson). In the coming months it will also be added to the Brentham website, [www.brentham.com](http://www.brentham.com).



*What is its purpose?* Brentham is one of the earliest garden suburbs, arguably the earliest. This conservation area is outstanding not only for its historic importance, but also because it is one of the best preserved of the garden suburbs, attracting researchers from all over the world. The survey provides a comprehensive source of reference for past and future Brentham residents, for those involved in the planning and conservation of Brentham, and for anyone interested in the history and architecture of Brentham. Making it available on the Brentham website will fulfil an important part of the Brentham Heritage Society's remit to educate the wider world about Brentham. In producing the survey, Brentham joins other conservation areas which have also documented their architectural heritage in this

way - Hampstead Garden Suburb, Bedford Park and the Haymills Estate, to name just three.

*What exactly was my commission?* To take a shot of every property - every house (over 600), blocks of flats and the suburb's two Grade II listed buildings, St. Barnabas and the Brentham Club. I also took additional shots of house groups (a defining feature of Brentham), and other 'features', such as 'vistas' and 'endpoints'. The brief was to provide high-quality images with excellent definition in order to record architectural detail. Therefore, when faced with a choice of two shots of the same house - one good to look at and one revealing more architectural detail - I opted for the latter.

*What equipment was used?* The camera was a 5.1 megapixel Olympus, the Camedia C5060. Each image is about 2 to 4MB in size. The images that form the survey were whittled down from more than 8,000. There are about 600 additional images (not part of the commissioned survey) held in the archive.

*What were the most frequently asked questions?* "Are you still at it?" from residents who grew used to seeing me walking up and down the streets of Brentham while the photos were taken over a nine-month period, May 2004 to January 2005. And secondly, "Would you like to come in for a coffee?" I was touched by the warm reception residents gave me! Thank you for all those kind offers (and to Chris who offered me shelter from a sudden downpour!)

*What were the difficulties?* Declining such invitations. If the light seemed right I made the most of it. The trees of Brentham were also problematic. Many obscured or cast shadows on the houses, which explains why some shots were taken in overcast weather and others in winter.

*What happens next?* The last part of the project is to make the survey available (in the form of low-resolution images) on the Brentham website. You'll be able to take a 'virtual tour' of Brentham by clicking on a map - a photo of the house will pop up, and in most cases there will also be some historical information associated with it, such as the date the house plans were approved and the name of the architect. It will be possible to add further information over time.

*Can I get a photo of my house?* It will be possible to order photos in the coming months. When more information is available it will be posted on the Brentham website [www.brentham.com](http://www.brentham.com) and published in a future issue of this newsletter.

Wendy Sender

### Open Garden Day, Sunday 12 June

Fingers crossed for a bright and sunny afternoon, preferably cooler than last year. Take the opportunity to walk around Brentham Garden Suburb and visit four previously unseen gardens open to inspire and delight you, along with favourites from previous years. A programme with descriptions of the gardens and a map will be available from addresses posted on notice boards nearer the time.

Nita Davis

### Rights of Way

At the last AGM, the status of the two main pathways on the estate was questioned. These paths run from Brentham Way to Brunner Road, and from Pitshanger Lane (by St Barnabas Millennium Hall) to Holyoake Walk. Both are paved, lit and cleaned by the Council. However, research has revealed that neither is registered in the Borough's definitive map of rights of way, which the Council must maintain under the Countryside and Rights of Way [CROW] Act, 2000.



The advice we have received is that both paths would certainly qualify as rights of way under previous legislation, as they lead from one public highway to another and there has been no "call into question" of rights of passage. The simplest way to safeguard these pathways is to ask the Council to adopt them as public highways, which would prevent any challenge over the responsibility for maintenance. We are requesting this and hope for a successful outcome soon.

A check was also made on the position of the many smaller pathways which run behind blocks of houses, some leading to allotments. It has been confirmed that these have the status of *private* rights of way, which means that access is restricted to those who need to use them to reach land they either own or lease. These paths do not qualify for public access under the tests mentioned, and passage can be refused to anyone with no right of access. Tony Miller

**Brentham Garden Awards, 2004**

Once again the estate had many good gardens competing for these awards, which made choosing difficult. For the first time, professionally-designed gardens were included among the contenders.

**Spring award, 2004:** *9 Brentham Way.* Long-overdue recognition for a well-maintained and pleasing garden. Borders packed with shrubs and spring interest such as tulips and wallflowers. Daisies tumble down among the foliage and a well-mown lawn creates the perfect foil. **Spring commendations:** 34 Ludlow Road, 2 Ruskin Gardens, 46 Meadvale Road.

**Summer award, 2004:** *46 Denison Road.* This small front garden is lovingly tended and has bags of colour, created mainly by the use of annuals. A very strong structure of box hedging gives a neat and cohesive background to the flower beds. **Summer commendations:** 51 Ludlow Road, 46 Brentham Way, 67 Meadvale Road

**Autumn award 2004:** *21 Ludlow Road.* A deceptively simple layout gives a feeling of space and light. Very neatly planted borders are highlighted by colourfully planted pots. A very well maintained lawn with a flowing shape provides the perfect foil. **Autumn commendations:** 11 Fowlers Walk, 44 Denison Road, 1 Neville Road

**Rose Bowl award for 2004:** *115 Fowlers Walk* A carefully designed corner plot using every aspect to enhance the use and look of this very stylish garden. Varied use of plant material skilfully contrasts leaf shapes, and topiary has been used as a solid background to some of these effects. A spectacular garden.

*Many thanks to Brian Vaughan, assisted by Gill Sylvester and Maureen McCarthy, for the time and effort spent judging these gardens, and apologies that this item was held over for lack of space in the last Brentham News.*

### Club Regeneration Update

We still await funding for the Club's ambitious development plans to create a new facility not only for members but for the whole community. As reported in the last *Brentham News*, little can happen - including community consultation - until the money is in place. This delay is frustrating for the Regeneration Board who have worked hard - with advice from a sports and leisure sector specialist - to produce a professional and viable business plan. As soon as a bank makes a loan offer we will let residents know what the consultation timetable and arrangements will be.

In the meantime, the results of the survey carried out over the New Year are encouraging. Of 2,000 questionnaires distributed to households in Brentham, Pitshanger and the surrounding streets, about 750 usable replies were returned - a very good response. Many included helpful detailed comments and confirm what we thought about local demand: people want a family-friendly centre with good sports and fitness facilities and a high quality but good value cafe-bar in a smoke-free atmosphere that is "*friendly, rather than chummy*". The vast majority of comments are enthusiastic: "*it would be great to have a modernised Brentham Club offering good health and sports facilities for all the family, which we could walk to!*"; "*it's a lovely building with huge potential ... for a wonderful neighbourhood club*". Survey results are being analysed and will be available as part of the consultation process. Sue Elliott

### Brentham on film!

The Brentham Heritage Society has commissioned local producer/director Martin Mortimore to make a 60-minute DVD provisionally titled *A Year in the Life of Brentham*. This will not only show the many activities - May Day, the Strawberry Tea, Garden Open Day - that are an established part of the Brentham calendar, but explain something of the significant social and architectural history of the estate and what makes living here so special. As well as the main film, there will be extra features - interviews and tips on conserving the special features of your house. Martin has extensive experience with the BBC and as a freelance, produced the Adam Hart-Davis history series *What the Romans/Ancients Did For Us* and worked on last year's popular conservation series *Restoration*.



The DVD will be on sale early next year. In the meantime you'll see Martin, who lives in Fowlers Walk, and his camera around the estate and at events. If he wants to talk to you on camera or film on your property for any reason, he will of course ask your permission. Sue Elliott



### Brentham Book to be reprinted



When *Brentham: a history of the pioneer garden suburb 1901-2001* was printed in November 2000, we thought 1,750 copies would last at least 10 years. In fact there are now just 46 left unsold! Perhaps this isn't too surprising - the book met great critical acclaim - "the best local history account in London in the last decade," wrote one reviewer, and many others agreed. So now the book is to be reprinted. If you spotted a mistake in the first edition, please let me know and I'll try to make the change. Email [wendy@brentham.com](mailto:wendy@brentham.com). Wendy Sender (editor)

*Ludlow Road resident Geoff Baxendale was seriously injured recently by a hit-and-run driver while crossing the road in Kingston. He is now out of hospital, and we send him and Pat our warmest wishes for a full and speedy recovery.*

### Brentham Gardeners, 2005 Season

This year two groups of Brentham residents with a shared interest in gardening are meeting regularly. The afternoon group meets at 2 pm on the third Wednesday of each month in different gardens on the estate, alternating with visits to gardens within a 20-mile radius of Brentham. The evening group meets at 7.30 pm on the first Tuesday of the month in one another's homes/gardens to discuss general gardening matters. Skills and knowledge are shared, and there will be occasional talks and demonstrations on specific topics such as propagation and design.

Both groups are relaxed and sociable. No gardening knowledge is necessary, nor is it required to host the group. New members are very welcome, especially for the afternoon group. *Maureen McCarthy*

#### Diary of forthcoming Brentham Events

Sunday 12 June Open Garden Day

Sunday 26 June Strawberry Tea

Sunday 3 July Family Cycle to Osterley Park

17-18 September London Open House Weekend

Look on noticeboards around the estate for further details, or see the website [www.brentham.com](http://www.brentham.com)

#### ABANDONED CARS - STOP PRESS

The Brentham Society is aware of the problem affecting Denison/Ludlow Green and is currently in discussions with Ealing Council and the Grainger Trust (owners of the land) on how to deal with the problem and that of fly-tipping now and if they recur in the future.

#### Brentham Society Subscriptions, 2005

It's not too late to renew your Brentham Society membership for 2005. Please pay your subscription (still £2 per household) to your membership collector (details on your subscription envelope) or to Sean and Debbi Cadogan at 12 Neville Road. Any questions about membership to Sean. Thank you for your support.

#### The PCA's Party in the Park, 2005

Will be held on Sunday 26 June, 1 - 9 pm. New this year will be a carousel, with horses. Help make this event a success, and raise funds for providing further amenities for our locality.

#### Planning and Conservation issues

If you are thinking of making alterations to your home, or need guidance on any aspect of planning and conservation, contact Heather Moore for an informal discussion, or contact Ealing Planning Department, ☎ 8825 6600

#### Good homes needed

Original Brentham door, ex-larder, 75.5" tall by 28" wide. Yours for the collecting from David Webster, ☎ 8998 1293. Sue Elliott offers a bread-making machine for a small donation to Brentham Society funds.

#### Ealing Civic Society

The 2005 annual public lecture, "Historic buildings and conservation, why bother?" will be given by Charles Mynors, FRTPI, MRICS, IHBC, barrister, at 8 pm on 5<sup>th</sup> July in the Telfer Room, Ealing Town Hall. Admission free

#### Street Reps Needed

Ever thought of becoming a street representative for the Brentham Society? It's a good way to meet new neighbours and make friends, and takes up an average of an hour or so a month at most.

If you are interested in finding out more, please contact Sean and Debbi Cadogan. We currently have vacancies in Neville and Brunswick Roads but vacancies in other streets occasionally come up.

The annual charity plant sale held at Ruskin Gardens on 20 March 2005 raised £270 for the Motor Neurone Disease Association. Thanks to all who helped and came to buy plants. *Sally Kelly*

#### Your shout!

Contributions to the Newsletter are always welcome, or tell us what you like (or dislike) about Brentham News and what you would like to read more about.

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