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HORNCHURCH RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION

WEBSITE: www.hornchurchresidentsassociation.org.uk

CHAIRMAN:	Cllr Stephanie Nunn	stephanie.nunn@havering.gov.uk	709926
FOCUS EDITOR:	Terry Matthews	terryllb@ntlworld.com	442751
ADVERTISING MANAGER:	Adrian Bates	Adrian.bates@yahoo.co.uk	440011

ELM PARK FOCUS TEAM



CLLR SALLY MILLER

07934 372674

Sally.Miller@havering.gov.uk
143 Grosvenor Drive, RM11 1PQ



CLLR BARRY MUGGLESTONE

709926

barry.mugglestone@havering.gov.uk
37 Carnforth Gardens RM12 5DL



CLLR STEPHANIE NUNN

709926

stephanie.nunn@havering.gov.uk
37 Carnforth Gardens RM12 5DL

HACTON FOCUS TEAM



CLLR NIC DODIN

458086

nic.dodin@havering.gov.uk
38 Newbury Gardens RM14 2PJ



CLLR RAY MORGON

479016

ray.morgon@havering.gov.uk
52A Devonshire Road RM12 4LQ



CLLR REG WHITNEY

553139

reg.whitney@havering.gov.uk
56 Edmund Road RM13 8LX

HYLANDS FOCUS TEAM



DAVE CABEZAS

451391

dave.cab@hylandsward.org.uk
115 Park Lane RM11 1EG



DEL GANLY

725651

del.ganly@hylandsward.org.uk
35 Globe Road RM11 1BW



JODY GANLY

725651

jody.ganly@hylandsward.org.uk
35 Globe Road RM11 1BW

ST ANDREWS FOCUS TEAM



CLLR PAUL MIDDLETON

07486 028384

Paul.Middleton@havering.gov.uk
33 Cromer Road, RM11 1EY



CLLR GERRY O'SULLIVAN

441391

Gerry.O'Sullivan@havering.gov.uk
118 Suttons Lane, RM12 6RR



BRYAN VINCENT

450481

bryan.vincent@standrewsward.org.uk
84 Stanley Road, RM12 4JW

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REGISTERED PLUMBER

The whirligig of activity started with Halloween, continued with Guy Fawkes and Diwali with a month of fireworks and led into peaceful Remembrance on Sunday 11 November. I was pleased to catch up with Bishop Peter at the service in St Nicholas Church, Elm Park as not only do I find him a very humble and approachable man, he was also very complimentary about the local community. If you attended the service you would understand why, it was simply the best. Yes I was reaching for my hanky when the children were singing and yes I was amazed at their clear and confident voices when they read their poems and prose to us. Well done to Benhurst and Elm Park Primary Schools, absolutely exceptional. Thank you to the ministers and everyone who made this such a special day. All groups and all ages were represented, promoting community and caring about each other, let's continue this theme into 2019.

Lines, Lines and more Lines: I've been informed there is no money for road markings until the next financial year (April 2019). This was as a result of a resident from Manston Way requesting the yellow lines to be renewed on the corner. I must admit I must challenge this claim and the general order of works when some things are done quicker than others. For example, I asked for white lines to be blacked out behind Kestrel Way, six weeks' waiting time and when I asked for the same in Gull Walk they were done within 2 days, before Kestrel Way. I omitted to add they are around the corner to each other. What's going on?

Planning Committee: Recently at the Planning Committee we had to make a decision about building on Green Belt land. This was an application for Westlands Playing Field Pavilion, London Road. The proposal was decided as appropriate development in the Green Belt as it would not adversely impact on the openness of the Green Belt in terms of its visual impact. Also, there was felt to be an identified need for the proposed development by Romford Football Club and Havering Council. The provision of additional and improved sports and recreational facilities within the Borough is in accordance with the general principles of national and local policy. This facility will be greatly welcomed by Romford Football Club, but the schools will also be able to take advantage too. Building on Green Belt applications are judged on an individual basis, it is not always wrong.

Bretons Manor: In response to a resident's report, I have asked for the area to be assessed to see if there are adequate bait boxes for rodents.

Kilmartin Way Development: The height barrier is now installed at the car park, but there are still outstanding items here which are down to the contractor. We will keep chasing.

Street Lights: Just a gentle reminder to let us have a note of the number when you ask us to report faults.

More Scams:

- A resident received a call from "Brian Johnston" allegedly from her bank's fraud team. He advised money from her account had been spent in PC World Manchester. He did not ask for personal details, but told her where she banked. She was suspicious so he said he would phone her mobile from the bank's number as printed on the back of her card, which he did. How did he do that? She mistrusted him quite rightly, as he suggested she log on to her account and transfer all her money to a "safe account". Please be careful, if in doubt – put the phone down.
- Two residents were out shopping when a young woman approached them and said she had been mugged and had had her money and purse stolen after drawing money from a cash machine. She seemed very genuine and they gave her money for an oyster card which she promised to repay. You know where this going, they never heard from her again.



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In my last article of the year for FOCUS, I would like to give a mention to our Executive Committee and give all of them a huge thank you for all the work they do on your behalf. Not all of the committee can appear on page 3, but they are there in the background beavering all year round and for that I have the utmost respect and praise. Thank you to every one of them.

Finally I would like to thank you, the residents for your support throughout the year and our deliverers for their help which we couldn't manage without. On behalf of the Team I wish you a Very Merry Christmas and a Happy and Healthy New Year. If you don't know what to buy someone for Christmas, a year's subscription to FOCUS is only £3!

LIFE IN ST ANDREWS WARD

Bryan Vincent

Firstly, I would like wish all members of the Association and in particular my loyal group of Focus deliverers my best wishes for Christmas and the New Year. None of us can know what life has in store for us in 2019 but just remember if you have good health what more can you wish more.

The Hornchurch Passion Play - I attended a "Armistice Centenary Supper" in the North Street Halls in aid of the registered charity that organises the Hornchurch Passion Play every few years on the green alongside the Queens theatre. What a great night entertained by the "Fairlytes" singing group. The money raised will help to fund the Passion Play due next to be performed in 2020. Just log on to "Hornchurch Passion Play" on the Internet to see the range of fundraising events being organised between now and 2020.

Sunrise Estate – Parkhill Close – Redevelopment - I recently reported the redevelopment of the Sunrise Estate was due for completion in early 2020. I now understand this along with other redevelopment projects being undertaken by Havering Council have been revised, either delayed or brought forward. The Sunrise project may not be completed now until 2020.

General - I have had a range of calls/complaints from residents this month comprising:

- Trees that are unsuitable for residential roads such as Rowan trees that litter the pavements with berries at this time of year. The offending trees have been reported and the Council I understand they will put them on a list for replacement in due course.
- A complaint regarding the current state of the road cleaning following the introduction of mechanised sweeping. The road in particular has been reported and I understand will be subject to a manual clean, thereafter a regular check the mechanical sweeping is effective.
- Leaves in tree lined roads such as my own in Stanley Road not being swept up.. The Council have cleaning groups clearing leaves at this time of year but they are only a small group so maybe by the time they get around to your road the leaves will have all blown away. I do know of some residents who collect the leaves put them in a plastic sack, pierce it with a few holes and leave it in a corner of the garden for a year or so to rot down and provide valuable compost – worth a try if the build-up leaves outside your home gets too much.
- One particular complaint from a resident was regarding a house that displays a range of large Teddy Bears, Dolls etc. all lined up looking out of their Bedroom window, the windows being left wide open all the time. OK funny in the short term but would you like to look up at them each day. They have briefly disappeared the last time I checked, maybe they have all gone on holiday but there are other matters regarding the terrible state of the front garden at the property that needs to be resolved. The resident who complained will know who they are and can rest assured we are doing all we can.

Fairkytes Arts Centre Activities - This month I would like to highlight at the centre the group called "Crafty Crafters" that met up every Wednesday morning from 10-12. It is run by Joy Wichary on 01708 223394. If you phone Joy see would be happy to tell you about the group and what crafts they cover. My own sister attends and she makes Birthday Cards using techniques such as Quilling (Paper Filigree) or Cross Stitching.

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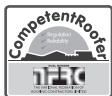
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Upper Rainham Road Traffic Calming Measures - We have heard from the Council that they are about to go to formal consultation with Residents about Traffic Calming measures and to extend the 30mph zone in Upper Rainham Road. This being on the stretch of road that runs from the railway bridge near the Council depot, towards Romford, past the traffic lights to turn off to Elm Park, along the Harrow lodge Park tennis courts and play areas, finishing just before the Laburnum Avenue junction.

This is the information we received:

"Havering Council are currently undertaking feasibility studies to reduce borough wide casualties, particularly where people are being killed or seriously injured. The Government and Transport for London have set targets for 2020 to reduce Killed or Serious injury collisions (KSIs) by 40%; Child KSIs by 50%; pedestrian and cyclist KSI's by 50% and slight injuries by 25% from the baseline of the average number of casualties for 2005-09. The Upper Rainham Road Accident Reduction Programme will help to meet these targets. We are proposing 30mph speed limits, carriageway narrowing with speed cushions and vehicle activated signs, road markings and road signs to reduce accidents along Upper Rainham Road."

Accident Summary: *In the five-year period to December 2017, twenty-five personal injury accidents (PIAs) were recorded along Upper Rainham Road. Of these twenty-five PIAs, two were serious; four involved pedestrians; three were speed related and seven occurred during the hours of darkness.*

Survey Results: *Traffic surveys showed that two-way traffic flows are up to 2100 vehicles per hour during peak periods along Upper Rainham Road by Laburnum Avenue.*

So please look out for your consultation letter when it comes through, it is important that you put your views across. I am sure residents using the Gordon Avenue junction to turn out onto Upper Rainham Road will welcome these traffic calming measures, as I have over the years received many calls and emails asking for something to be done to slow the traffic along Upper Rainham Road.

Fly tipping in access alleyway Laburnum Avenue - Cllr Nunn and I recently visited a resident from Laburnum Avenue, (Upper Rainham Road end). who was complaining of fly tipping in the access alleyway and also some parts of Harrow Lodge Park. We walked the alleyway with the resident who pointed out various sites where rubbish had been dumped into the park, and we noted that most of the rubbish was grass cuttings and unwanted plants that looked they had been discarded from hanging baskets.

The resident asked if the Council could write to residents of Laburnum Avenue asking them not to dump their garden waste in the park and alleyway, but we did explain that this is quite costly to the Council as the letters have to be hand delivered, and the Council cannot afford this type of communication, as there needs to be continuity throughout the whole Borough. We also discussed that most of the discarded waste was biodegradable and over the winter months would rot down (not a reason to dump it in the Park!). I have informed Environment Services and our Parks and Open Spaces Team, this will be monitored for future fly tipping.

Abandoned Vehicle in St. Leonards Way - I received an email from a resident of St. Leonards who had concerns regarding a vehicle that had been parked up on the kerb for over a week in St. Leonards Way. Had it been stolen and then abandoned? I checked on the website vehicleenquiry.service.gov.uk and could see that the vehicle was taxed and Insured. I asked our Safer Neighbourhood Police Team to check if the car had been reported stolen, which it had not, and with this information I was able to put the resident's mind at rest. We are always here to help with any concerns you may have.

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Regency Gardens - I reported back in September that residents from Regency Gardens had been in touch to complain of overgrown shrubs at the end of their road and junction with Windsor Road. I have heard back from the Councils maintenance team, who said that they would increase the frequency of maintaining the shrub beds to quarterly.

Environmental Issues - Blocked drains along Hornchurch Road have been reported, I am still chasing up for the cones in Hyland Way to be collected. A resident contacted me to report the poor state of the pavement in Hyland Way where the new building works has been going on behind the Beauty shop, at time of writing I am waiting for a response from the Council. A request for a fire break to be cleared of foliage in Apollo Close has been submitted and I am waiting for the Council to come back to me.

On behalf of your Hylands Ward Focus Team, we wish you all a very Happy Christmas and a Healthy 2019.

ST ANDREWS WARD MATTERS	Councillor Gerry O'Sullivan
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Remembrance Sunday - Bryan, Paul and I were honoured once again to be invited by the President Mr L Wright of The Royal British Legion to attend the Remembrance Parade and Service which was held on the 11 November in Hornchurch. We were joined by ex-service personnel, residents and our local MP Julia Lopez, along with Havering's Deputy Mayor and Councillor Ray Morgon from our Hacton Ward.

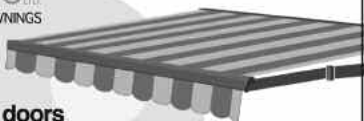
This year is the 100th anniversary of the armistice at the end of the First World War. The service and parade were a moving tribute and our chance to pay our respect and to remind our residents of the enormous sacrifice made by our servicemen and women during that conflict. We should also remember the sacrifice that wives and mother made for many years after the war because as they were the ones who were left to raise families on their own.

Prior to the service Bryan, Paul & I were all in Hornchurch at different times collecting donations from our residents on behalf of The Royal British Legion. I was amazed and humbled by how generous you all were. Following the service, we were invited back to the Hornchurch Branch of The Royal British Legion where we had the opportunity to speak with ex-service personnel, Legion members and our MP Julia Lopez. I would like on behalf of Bryan & Paul to say a big thank you to the Hornchurch Branch of The Royal British Legion for inviting us and for making us so very welcome.

Road & Pavement Repairs - If you received the Living Magazine in November you would have seen an article from the Tory Administration called "Better Roads, better journeys". While I am sure that every resident in Havering would be glad to see some investments in our roads after years of neglect by previous Tory Administrations.

We were then told that the locations in the borough identified for resurfacing works are prioritised according to data collected from the United Kingdom Pavement Management System (UKPMS) condition survey undertaken on every road and footway in Havering. The information is then verified by council officers and fed in to a software program called Horizon which then prioritises highway maintenance schemes. Having reviewed the list I was somewhat surprised by some of the roads chosen for resurfacing in the St Andrews Ward. We can all agree that the roads mentioned do need resurfacing, but there are many others roads in our ward in a worse state of repair, a prime example of this is Cedar Road. I am also sure our members could name many other roads in our ward in a very poor condition. I find it appalling that they can spend a great deal of your money on so called smart computer system that is unable to select the roads that are most in need of resurfacing. Furthermore, they haven't even asked your ward councillors for their view on what roads need repair.

If you feel your road is in serious need of repair or resurfacing, please let us know.



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The Alleyway between Fentiman Way and the High Street Hornchurch - As mentioned last month a resident reported that the bushes in this alleyway needed cutting back and the drains were blocked. I am pleased to report that the bushes have been cut back and the drains are being investigated.

Havering Street Watch - We have mentioned in FOCUS in recent months that the reduction in Police funding over the last few years, is having a major impact on local policing. You're local Safer Neighborhood Policing Team could do with your help.

Street Watch Havering has now been successfully running for over 3 years. Each volunteer is police checked before they can join the scheme, they are required to read and sign the observers guide and take part in a short induction programme. All members are covered by public liability insurance. If you are suitable you could become a member and work alongside your local police service.

Practical Guidance while on Street Watch patrol

All Street Watch volunteers have an induction process to complete before going out on patrol. Their first patrol will be in company with either a PCSO or an experienced Street Watch volunteer. Safety of Street Watch personnel is paramount. Therefore Street Watch members are instructed to 'Look, listen and report, but don't have a go'. Volunteers must always patrol in pairs, and will go on patrol only when they feel confident and comfortable they can do so. Patrol times are of their choosing. When patrolling, all volunteers must have in their possession a Street Watch Notebook in which practical patrol guidance is given. One member must carry a mobile phone. Street Watch members must wear a high visibility jacket during patrols. This helps identify themselves as Street Watch members and also be a health and safety precaution especially if patrolling in the evenings when light is reduced. It assists Police patrols to identify members if called to an area.

If you can spare some time and would like more information please contact Sally Miller, Havering Street Watch, 079343 72674 or swhavering@btinternet.com. Alternatively contact St Andrews SNT on 02086493527 or email StAndrews.snt@met.police.uk who will organise an introductory meeting.

Ward Walk About - When touring our ward I often come across items that are broken or need repairing. If you know of any lights, street furniture or any other items that need to be repaired or replaced can you please let me know.

Last but not least - With Christmas fast approaching, I would like to say a big thank you to all our members and deliverers for the support they provided during the May Local Election and throughout the rest of the year. Without your support I would not have been elected and could not have worked in council on your behalf. Please have a very Merry and safe Christmas.

LIFE IN ELM PARK

Councillor Barry Muggleston

Remembrance Sunday - I would like to thank all involved in organising Remembrance Sunday, in particular the marshals who looked after the parade as without these volunteers the parade would not happen. We were pleased that the Bishop conducted the service this year and that so many children were present from the local schools and youth organisations. I would also like to thank all the collectors who collected for the Poppy Appeal in the two weeks leading up to Remembrance Sunday. A special mention to Mick Mellor who collected outside Elm Park station on the cold mornings and the team who looked after the Barking and Dagenham College students who once again collected for the Elm Park Branch. This list could go on and on, so many good Elm Park people who helped out and gave their time freely. Well done to all, as I write this article, we have so far collected £2,000 for the Poppy Appeal so well on our way to catching up and even overtaking last year's total.



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Stephen Avenue - A resident contacted me as they had heard that the green in Stephen Avenue was going to be removed for extra parking spaces, well this was news to me as no resident has contacted me to request this and no council officer had said there were plans for this. As you know we support this green and in the past we have obtained bark for the planted area and green recycling bags for all the pruning the residents do on this green. We do not support the removal of green belt or green areas. What we do support is the residents and their wishes. Also this green is respected by Council officers, this year it was scheduled as part of the London Borough of Havering London in Bloom entry.



Freeborne Gardens - Freeborne Gardens is named after Wing Commander John Freeborn, a distinguished pilot who fought in WW2. As you can see from his surname, the road name has an extra “e” which was noticed by Amy Freeborn the great niece of the Wing Commander when she was on the bus travelling down Mungo Park Road. Amy remembered her uncle’s stories of the War and in one of the stories John Mungo-Park was mentioned, so she decided to investigate to find out if Freeborne Gardens was named after her Uncle and of course it was as many streets in and around this area are named after many heroes. Sadly, it was not possible to re-name the road with the missing “e” as it would affect all the deeds, legal paperwork etc. Therefore, the council arranged for a plaque to be placed on the green in Freeborne Gardens, I organised a service of unveiling the plaque in the presence of Amy and residents of the road. It was also attended by my ward colleagues Councillors Nunn and Miller, Rev Amanda and Father Tom, the local MP Jon Cruddas and ex-servicemen.

Garages - A planning application on Dunningford Close to turn a garage into a habitable room was rejected. We have had this in the past where the main reason for rejection is the loss of parking spaces, which I understand as we have parking issues, but at the same time the Labour Mayor is encouraging planning applications with very little parking spaces. So please remember if you have a garage and you want to turn it into a habitable room you need to look at parking provisions. Also, if you’re looking to buy a house with a garage, what can you do with the garage? Could you get planning permission or will it have to remain as a garage?

Community Clean Up - A suggestion was made for a community clean up over Brittons Park, so on a nice sunny morning in November a small group of quality people turned up and went around picking up all sorts of litter that had been thrown away by, in my opinion, idiots. If they use our parks/green spaces they should take their litter home or use the bins provided. Well it was a successful clean up and some of the group also went over to Bretons Manor to clean up litter. Thanks must go to Kelly White whose idea it was to have this community clean up, well done Kelly. If anyone else is interested in a community clean up please let us know.

Frustration - A resident contacted me regarding a Pay and Display meter in the car park next to Elm Park Library, the letter Z did not work. I checked and confirmed it didn’t work. I reported it and the Council said “OH YES IT DOES”. I said “OH NO IT DOESN’T”, (I know we are leading into pantomime season, but really?). So I reported it again and asked them to check, and yes the council came back and said “sorry it doesn’t work”, so an order has gone in to get this repaired. They also stated the following ***“Rather than remove the machine from service, the Service Unit Manager has asked Civil Enforcement Officers (CEO’s) not to enforce vehicles which may have been unable to input the letter Z.”***

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Community Urgent Care: The BHR CCGs reviewed the Urgent care services currently delivered outside of hospital – walk in centres, GP hubs and GP out of hours. **Option 1 has been agreed.** The case for change was approved by the board as a result of financial recovery program. Two options were recommended. These were taken forward in a 14-week public engagement exercise “Right care, right place, first time.”

Option 1: 4 Urgent treatment centres (UTC) and 8 different places to book an appointment and get medical help that same day via NHS 111.

Option 2: 2 Urgent Treatment centres (UTC) and 10 different places to book an appointment and get medical help that same day via NHS 111.

Both proposed Options focus on a move to bookable services in community hubs and Urgent treatment centres(UTCs), book through NHS 111. The main difference between an Urgent Care Centre (UCC) and an Urgent treatment centre (UTC) is that a UTC has diagnostic access and appointments that are bookable through NHS 111.

The 14-week consultation was extended for another fortnight following representation from local Authority Health Overview and Scrutiny Committees. The majority of respondents (67%) in favour of Option 1 which comprises 4 UTCs and 8 bookable only community urgent care services. 19% in favour of Option 2 which comprises of 2 UTCs and 10 bookable only community urgent care services. Option 1 would save £1.07 million a year, Option 2 would save £1.19 million a year -£117,589 a year more than Option 1.

NHS England expects BHR CCG to have UTCs in place by December 2019. Both Queens and King George Hospitals are being upgraded to meet UTC standard.

The core principles for UTCs include:

a) Open 12 hours a day, GP led, staffed by GPs, nurses and other Clinicians with access to diagnostic, e.g. urinalysis, echocardiogram (ECG) and x-rays, blood test as well as treatment for ailments like wound closure and management of minor head and eye injuries. Staff will also be able to issue e-prescriptions and repeat prescriptions.

b) Urgent appointment offered within 4 hours via NHS 111, a walk-in access at UTCs, no appointment necessary.

Based on the existing provision of diagnostics, Harold wood Polyclinic and Barking Community Hospital to become UTCs. It will not happen overnight, hopefully by December 2019.

GP (OOH): There are 3 locations, Grays Court in Dagenham, Queens hospital and King George hospital. Open from 6.30pm to 8am via NHS 111.

GP (Hubs): There are 7 of them, 2 in B & D, 2 in Havering North Street Medical care and Rosewood Medical centre and 3 in Redbridge. Over 60.000 appointments were made available at our seven hubs last year. The hubs provide a useful service for people who are unable to see their own GP during normal opening hours.

Havering Council on 12 September debated and voted unanimously to maintain and upgrade services at Harold wood Polyclinic. BHRUT and Healthwatch Havering both support Option 1.

This has been passed to me by Healthwatch Havering - Message from BHR CCG Mental Health Direct - The BHR number for **Mental Health Direct is 0300 555 1000** “We can arrange for you to speak with a mental health professional. We can also advise you about what service to contact to get the support you need”. Calls from a BT landline are the cost of a local call. Calls from other landlines and mobile providers will vary and may cost more. **Patient information-Contact our service in Barking and Dagenham, Havering, Redbridge and Waltham Forest NELFT Mental Health Direct - Tel: 0300 555 1000** (Open to callers 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.)

TERRY MATTHEWS

Christmas Is Coming - As I reflect on the past year, it has certainly been an eventful one for me personally with my daughter getting married and now expecting her first child next year and my ninety-six year old mother finally getting her wish to pass from this world.

I also recently lost a close friend in former Conservative Deputy Leader of the Council (and Leader for a few months) Steven Kelly. He was a very intelligent, knowledgeable and experienced Councillor. Although after 2006 we were no longer in the same political group, we nonetheless remained good friends and regularly met up and spoke on the telephone. He was always on hand to provide helpful guidance and advice. Sadly, at a time when the Conservative Administration needed someone to carefully scrutinise what is being put forward by officers, he was left to languish on the backbenches. What a waste of someone who was very good at carefully scrutinising detail.

And then there was the local elections back in May. Sadly, we did not get the result overall that we wanted and frankly deserved, mainly down to the lies that the Tories put out about us. We will strongly be challenging and rebutting these allegations in the future.

I don't think that I have had a busier year as a councillor and I expect the same again in 2019, as more of the cuts begin to bite into those front-line services that we all value and the Tories fail to make the changes needed to make the council more efficient and effective. But as they say, time will tell. The Romford Tories claimed after the election that the Town Hall was now safe in their hands and I wish that were true, but sadly, I anticipate another busy year ahead scrutinising and challenging what the Conservative Administration do, along with colleagues from other Residents Association Groups. I already hear that the Leader of the Council is unhappy about the number of decisions that we have already "called in" for further scrutiny. Well, I have a simple message for him. Get your highly paid Cabinet Members on top of their brief and make sure they question and challenge plans put forward by council officers. His Administration should be leading the council not officers.

A good example of this was where I "called in" the planned road and pavement improvement programme. The new programme is supposed to tackle the worst roads and pavements first. In Hacton Ward, there is no road to be completely renewed and only one road where the pavements are going to be renewed. Although the road in question (Chiltern Gardens) does not have the best pavements in the world, I would argue that there are other roads in the ward that are at least as bad and probably worst. So why did they not make the list? I made the same point last year about the Suttons Farm Estate where about half the pavements were renewed. Strangely, I had more complaints after the work had been done than before. I was told that the other half would be in this year's programme. This we now know is not going to be the case. Where is the consistency? The programme for this year included an extra £1.2 million that had been made available as monies previously agreed to go on other schemes were no longer required for their original purpose. However, when asked which schemes this involved, neither council officers nor the Cabinet Member knew the answer even though they had a week's notice of the question. Not very impressive. Must do better. I shall certainly be diving much deeper into this area of the council to establish precisely how these roads and pavements for renewal are arrived at by the "Horizon" system which I understand cost in the region of 100k to install. At present, I am not sure that the data being put into the system is producing the right results.

The initial analysis of the Chancellor's recent budget proposals seems to provide little cheer for Local Government, but at least austerity is ending. Not sure that anyone is buying that one Mr Hammond. And as for that budget deficit, do you remember when this was going to be eliminated by George Osborne by 2015, well now we will be lucky if it will be eliminated even by 2024/25. In fact, my prediction is that we will be running budget deficits for many many years

after that. Never mind Mr Hammond, let's just kick the can down the road and pass even more debt onto our children and grandchildren.

Anyway, that's enough about politics. Can I take this opportunity to wish you and yours a very Happy Christmas. See you in 2019.

Yet Another Scam - A local window cleaning company contacted me to say that a scammer has obviously taken note of the houses that they clean and then knocks on their customers door for payment. Always satisfy yourself that you are handing over money to the right person. Their company employees always carry ID.

Mobile Phone Mast - You may recall that some time ago approval was given to install a new mobile phone mast in an area of Hornchurch Country Park close to the footpath that runs next to the Ambulance Station.

One day back in late summer, without notice to the council, contractors just turned up to install the mast. They proceeded to start to dig out the bank along by the bus lay-by in Suttons Lane to get onto the site. Residents quickly alerted the council and myself of this and there was a immediate halt to the works. A meeting took place the same week with various parties and it was clear that there was some confusion over the exact location where approval had been given to install the mast and that there was no plan by the contractors as to how the works were going to be carried out in an area of open space that was fully accessible to the public. At the time of writing, work is still ongoing in the background to deal with a number of issues.

Parking Tickets - The Conservative Administration will be making an application to seek agreement to allow the same rates of Penalty Charge Notices (PCN's) to apply right across Havering. At present, Romford is in a different banding to the rest of the borough and therefore the rate of charge is higher. Outside Romford, less serious contraventions are charged at £60. If agreed, this will increase to £80 and the charge for more serious contraventions will increase from £110 to £130.

This will apply to PCN's issued by hand, as all Moving Traffic Contraventions are already charged in Havering at the highest rate. The reason given for this change is to discourage illegal parking, better protection of kerb space, improve road safety and reduce traffic in the borough. When challenged to provide evidence to demonstrate all of this, it was not forthcoming.

IN AND AROUND ELM PARK

Councillor Sally Miller

Wishing you all the very best wishes for a safe and Happy Christmas and hope all your dreams come true in the new year.

Policing for the future: Many things were supported in the recent budget, duty on beer, wine and spirits was frozen, business rates to public toilets were reduced but there was nothing for policing. I appreciate that when you've been out on the lash making the most of these frozen duties on alcohol and find yourself busting for a wee it may seem like an emergency when you can't find a public loo, but is it really fair to put these above the support desperately needed by our police officers dealing with real emergencies on a daily basis?

A recent report by the House of Commons Home Affairs Committee regarding an inquiry launched in January 2017 on Policing for the future stated that *"since the launch, 6 police officers have lost their lives in the line of duty". "On a daily basis, officers are faced with some of the most exacting and upsetting scenarios imaginable, and deal with them with dignity, dedication & commitment to public service. Many people spend the worst hours of their life in the reassuring presence of a police officer: the aftermath of a violent attack, an unexpected bereavement, a mental health crisis, or the anxious wait for a loved one who has gone missing. Policing is a service which, above all, depends on the people who work within it, and if they are*

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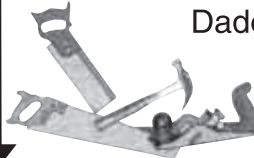
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not supported the service will badly decline”.

When I am out and about in my various roles I regularly get complaints from people who have called the police and they have not turned up or have been told that their particular issue won't be taken any further because of lack of resources. The sad fact is that our officers are stretched to the limit and as much as they would like to, don't have the time to investigate every crime.

As an example, I went out on Halloween in a Met Police response vehicle dealing with the emergency calls that are elevated for immediate response. During the course of the shift officers dealt with a variety of calls; a traffic warden that had been assaulted, an allegation of domestic violence, an attempted theft of a moped, a care worker, on her way to visit a client who had been frightened but a group of nine juveniles on masks surrounding her car and threatening her with a knife. Halloween the perfect excuse to don a mask and create havoc.

The one that seemed to cause the most issues was the theft of fire extinguishers from a Tesco petrol garage – these were used by a group of juveniles to wreak havoc, they discharged them outside the Crown Pub, over various vehicles, smashed car windows with them, and sprayed houses with them. The officer I was with, caught up with them heading into Harrow Lodge Park, as the car approached them they sprayed the windscreen and as he ran after them they discharged some of the contents in his face leaving him with a rather nasty cough – I am glad to say the effects were not long term and the next day he was fine.

I spoke to many officers after Halloween and have been advised that there were a lot of calls relating to people being threatened with knives, and upon arrival it soon became apparent that no knives were involved – it seems that members of the public have realised that as soon as they mention a weapon they get a quicker response from the police. Whilst I appreciate that when something happens to you, you want an immediate response but by bending the truth you are potentially taking that response vehicle away from a much more serious situation. So please think twice!

I also spend a lot of time working with juveniles that have been arrested, many for being involved in drug dealing, many in theft, sometimes caught carrying knives. I asked one lad why he doesn't go to college or get a job, he stated that he can get £2000 a week and the outcome of his arrest would just be a referral to a Youth Offending Team (YOTs). One juvenile arrested with a blade had already been given three referrals to a YOT – something needs to change and there has to be better deterrents to prevent these youngsters getting into a life of crime -after all they are our future! I am hoping to work with our local MPs in the coming weeks to look at how we can change this. If any of you have any strong opinions on this please email me.

I would like to say a heartfelt thanks to the two officers that shared their late turn with me, let me bend their ears (I did warn them when I got in the car that I talk a lot) and ask lots of questions. All our officers work hard to keep us safe and we need to get behind them and give them all the support we can.

Did you know you can now report certain crimes online? You can now report a number of issues online (www.met.police.uk) including; crime, road traffic accidents, missing people, antisocial behaviour, fraud, lost or stolen vehicles, lost property, civil disputes & possible terrorist activity.

These reports are picked up by a dedicated team of officers working from Metropolitan Police Control Centre in Lambeth (MetCC) all trained to deal with 999 and 101 calls. I attended a briefing session at MetCC Lambeth to see how it all works. 15.9% of reports are handled by the digital team and there is a single online home to which 39 out of 43 police forces are signed up – put simply it means that if you report something on the Met site that happened in an area covered by say Kent police the reports are automatically diverted to that police force. This service is already taking the strain of the 101 telephone service.

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Belated Happy 80th Birthday – on 31 October I was on one of my constitutionals in the country park when I happened upon a small gathering of people with cake and sandwiches. A group of park users had all clubbed together to organise a surprise 80th birthday for local resident Gerry. What a lovely thing for them to have done, very community spirited!

Litter pick – It was good to see all the community minded volunteers at the Brittons playing field litter pick, lots of bags of rubbish were collected.

AROUND ST ANDREWS WARD **Councillor Paul Middleton**

Christmas is coming - By the time you read this it will be in to the first weeks of December. I hope you are prepared for Christmas. I always enjoy seeing family and friends and this is no exception. With it being cold outside, having friends and family around is warming.

Please spare a thought for your neighbours. If you know any old or lonely people in your road, please offer help if you can, whether this is to do some shopping for them, help them with a chore or just to sit and have a cup of tea, every little helps and is often well received.

Subscription collection - Gerry, Bryan and I have been busy hitting the roads in October and November – weather and time permitting we will be continuing in December/January onwards. We have been collecting the subscriptions from members who have not yet paid this year in the St Andrews Ward. If we have knocked and received no answer you would have be left with a letter explaining where and how to pay. Please do, it costs to get this magazine printed each month and at £3 a year is an absolute bargain. If you have not paid yet, please get in touch with Gerry (details on page 3).

Lidl update - We met with Lidl management to discuss issues around noise, delivery times, lights being left on overnight or turning off and on during the night. It was a very productive meeting, Lidl want to be good neighbours and work with the community, we just need to guide them and help them understand what is acceptable. If they introduce the changes we agreed, the people living near the store should have a more harmonious environment.

I also chased Lidl regarding the no right turn restriction. The Lidl management team have raised a planning permission request to remove the No Right Turn restriction. We have asked for details of this request and at the time of writing this, have just received a copy of the plans I will study these and talk to the council. If the proposal makes sense we will back the application. I still see cars making the illegal turn. Although the numbers are reducing, no one wants to receive a fine for this so please be aware of the restriction.

I have heard of a few (very limited number of) people having the fine overturned for making the illegal right turn, I am trying to find out how they have managed to get the penalty rejected and I will let you know if I find anything that I can repeat.

KFC - A resident had complained about the noise of the extractor fans at KFC. When I originally visited the site, I could not hear anything, however during further visits more recently I have heard the noise. I will be asking environmental services to check if this breaches allowable noise levels or not.

Chopsticks Restaurant - One of the residents in Grey Towers Avenue made me aware of building work that had been carried out at the back of this Chinese restaurant, potentially without authority. The work has been inspected. According to the planning team the work was completed over 4 years ago. The area is safe and meets building regs. Unless someone knows and can prove differently nothing more will be done regarding this building.

Hornchurch Christmas Cracker - This year the Christmas tree lights were turned on in the centre of Hornchurch on 17 November, I hope you are enjoying the festive lights and tree. There is also a Christmas Fayre in the Queens theatre on Saturday 15 December – please show your

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support, it is a great theatre which we will miss if it ever goes.

Police advice this Christmas period - Approximately 60% of burglaries take place in the hours of darkness, it is at this time of the year that we start to see an increase in burglary offences with empty properties being more apparent to burglars.

With the darker evenings drawing in, you are advised to follow these steps to help prevent becoming a victim:

- ✓ Leave timer switches on lights
- ✓ Place motion sensor security lighting at the front and rear of properties
- ✓ Fit a fixed safe for small valuable items
- ✓ Fit a home security alarm
- ✓ Do not display your wealth on social media or advertise when you are going to be away from your home, especially if your security settings are open and public
- ✓ If selling any valuables online, do not disclose anything to reveal the address of where the valuables are stored
- ✓ If selling your property, be careful what is shown in the images placed on house-selling websites, as criminals can use these images to identify valuables and also analyse floor plans
- ✓ Keep an eye on those who are elderly, or vulnerable to distraction burglaries.

Scams: please be aware - Some of the beggars/homeless you see around Hornchurch are not poor and in need of help. The local SNT police and homeless help charities have offered help and assistance only to be turned down in nearly every case. Although you think you are helping, please do not feed or pay the beggars. The police have pointed out that it is illegal for them to beg. If people continue to 'assist', these people will not go away. The worst offenders are using this money to feed drug habits and alcohol abuse, which only encourages drug dealing in the area. If you see someone in need please get in touch and we will alert the relevant group to help them.

I had an email from a very nice lady who told me about a scam. She received a phone call with a pre-recorded voice telling her that her broadband was going to be cut off and to press 1 on the key pad to talk to someone about this. Fortunately, she did not press 1, she hung up. She then contacted her broadband provider who confirmed that the call was not from them and it was likely to be a scam. If you get a call like this, please just hang up.

I also had a scam call from someone claiming to be from BT – my computer was causing issues on the internet. I told them I would be very interested in what they found as I was a BT engineer (I am not, I just said I was). The caller could not hang up quick enough.

As this is the last time you will hear from me this year, I wish you all a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. Stay safe, look out for your neighbours and have the best time.

HYLANDS MATTERS

Del Ganly

T'is the season to be wary! - With the Christmas shopping well underway, some might let their guard slip to some of the scams out there, so I thought I'd best relay two that were sent to me from residents.

HMRC have, apparently, had their phone number cloned (0345 300 3900). A resident received an automated call from the Tax Office regarding fraud and an arrest warrant. Smelling a rat when asked to press 1 to talk to someone, they hung up and searched the number. This did prove to be HMRC's number, so rang and spoke to an official there who confirmed it was not them who had called, and thanked the resident for bringing this to their attention, and added that pressing 1 could have initiated a premium rate call, with personal details being asked for



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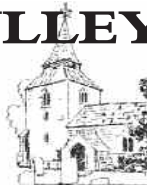


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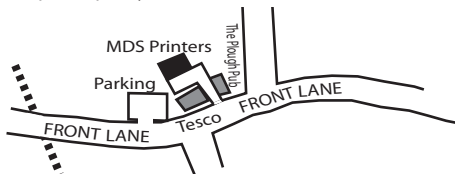
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in order to use elsewhere.

TV Licensing also sent an email to another resident who informed the Hillcrest Neighbourhood Watch group of a probable scam regarding a failed payment.

These types of emails do look so legitimate and some do not think twice to click the supplied links. This in turn takes you to an official looking website, often copied from the real one but with their own server taking any data you may enter (username/password details etc.)

Please do be extra vigilant and anything that seems dodgy, handle with care!

Noisy Manholes/drain covers - My daughter asked why they were called 'manholes'? While it may not be long before the term gets politically corrected, the only reason I could give was a guess that it was only men who would go down such holes in the 'old days'. I came up with a few funny alternatives (to me anyway!) but welcome your suggestions.

Whilst re-felting a shed roof that backed onto Butts Green Road, I was almost driven to distraction by the constant clack/clack of one such cover. As the owner was out, I asked the neighbour if it bothered him, and after a long rant, it was a yes. He had rung the Council daily for the last two weeks but no joy, and as he didn't have a computer I offered to report it on his behalf. It was hard work trying to find the relevant 'report it' page, so I had to report it as a noise issue and go into some depth so the problem could be resolved. While I am aware this is not in a HXRA ward, there are several noisy covers in Hylands, and I wanted to find out how to do it so I could let you helpful lot know how you can report them and get the job done quickly, it must drive you MAD! If there is a better way, I will write next time.

Focus Fees - the new year brings with it the next year's subscription to the HXRA which includes your much loved FOCUS magazine. While some members have paid up front, and still have a few years' worth under their belt, there are still some recipients who must think it is a 'freebie' that they have grown accustomed to. We do our best to collect in the fees, and some of our deliverers also help us with that which is much appreciated, but there are quite a few who still owe. If you are up to date, thank you, if you are behind, don't be embarrassed, just send your payment to cover the year(s) owed and this next one. Your address will change from red to green as if by magic, and no-one will know!

By post, cheques should be made payable to The Hornchurch Residents' Association and sent to your ward representative's address as per page 3. They can also be put through their letterbox, as can cash in a sealed envelope, and please do clearly mark your address.

Paypal was quite successful last year with many of you preferring the ease of it while on your phones or computers, however this does have a fee but is still cheaper than sending by post. The paypal address is **paypal.me/focusfees**. Don't forget your address and postcode as a note, £3 per year plus paypal fee (£3.31/£6.42/£9.52/£12.63) cheaper than sending a cheque in the 1st class post.

Note: although you can pay by credit card, Paypal charges you another 31/42/52/63p)

Best news ever! – that is if you happen to live near to the bus stop in Upper Rainham Road by Laburnum Avenue. After several hand-written letters over the course of about 18 months from a lovely resident who uses the stop, I am pleased to say that my reporting it (Jody doing so when she was Councillor) on their behalf has finally paid off and the 'lake' that would appear whenever there was some rain, now goes down the new drain. This started to occur when the stop was made 'accessible' by extending it out into the road without any drainage whatsoever, and while the water probably just comes back out of the drain cover the other side, I should think it has made all the difference.

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