

BVRG UPDATE – JANUARY 2007

Happy New Year to all our members and we hope you had a lovely festive season. Here's an update of the latest BVRG activity and we would be really interested in your feedback on any of these issues. Our contact details are on the last page if you are keen to email or write with any comments or suggestions.

COUNCILLORS

As you know already, we had three new Liberal Democrat councillors elected to represent the Blackheath ward last year. The BVRG steering group met with two of them on Tuesday 9th January to hear what their ideas are for Blackheath and to tell them of our priorities for the area.

We discussed a variety of issues affecting Village residents, including licensing, anti-social behaviour, parking, policing and the lack of effective CCTV provision in the Village. We were encouraged by the very positive response from the councillors, and hope to be able to give you more information about how they and we will work together in the future for the benefit of all Blackheath residents.

We are also planning a meeting in February / March with the Greenwich councillors for Blackheath.

LICENSING UPDATE

Licences we have been involved with over the last six months:

1. The Crown - monitoring
2. The Hare and Billet - monitoring
3. Princess of Wales – monitoring
4. The Railway - now non-smoking. We will be monitoring evenings in this premises to see how it has changed.
5. O'Neills – members have reported that there are still issues with noise and urination. We will be requesting a meeting with the manager there soon.
6. Zero Degrees - monitoring
7. Cave Austin - monitoring
8. The Dacre Arms - monitoring
9. El Pirata – this restaurant has increased its restaurant capacity and has assured BVRG that they have no plans at all to operate as a nightclub.
10. The Cactus Pit - monitoring
11. Davitos - monitoring
12. Khans – monitoring
13. Loco – now trading as Locale under new owners. Our Chair and Vice Chair met with one of their new directors, Douglas Smillie, in October. He told them that there was no intention of asking for extensions in licensing hours, nor of applying to extend the premises. We are hoping that there will be some improvement from this premises for its neighbours in Lawn Terrace.
14. Fish and chip shop - monitoring
15. Martins – they applied to sell alcohol and be open until 10pm in the autumn. This went before the Licensing Committee on Thursday 14th December and their application was granted. BVRG objected to this application based on Protection of Children.
16. The Heath - We had a report on the plans for use of the Heath in the coming year which is reassuringly similar in type and quantity to previous years. This was a relief, because there had been some worry about the possibility of noisy events taking place. The Blackheath Joint Working Party which includes representatives from Greenwich Council, Lewisham Council, the

Blackheath Society and on which BVRG is represented, seems to be taking its duty to carefully monitor the use of the Heath very carefully.

17. Best One – we are currently investigating whether this convenience store needs a different licence to be able to trade for 24 hours.

We also wrote to the Lewisham Licensing Committee in November, requesting more information from them about how they interpret the new Licensing Act. One of our ongoing difficulties is that the Licensing Committee appear to be reluctant to accept that the alcohol related anti-social behaviour suffered by residents relates to any specific licensed premises in the Village. We raised the issue of the difficulty of gaining evidence about specific premises. Although we have had a response from Councillor Till, we are still not entirely happy with their answers to our concerns so far and will be continuing our dialogue with them.

Once again, we would urge you to record and pass on to us any experiences of anti-social behaviour. Please remember to include the time, date and location, with any photographic evidence if available.

The Cumulative Impact Zone (previously the Saturation Zone) has now been discussed for a long time and appears to be making progress – although slow! – at last. We hope to be able to provide you with more information about this in our next newsletter.

POLICE LIAISON

The next meeting with the Blackheath Sector police will be held in early January and we will be sending BVRG representatives to discuss any issues relating to the policing of Blackheath.

NEW BVRG PHONE NUMBER

This has now changed to 020 8143 4623. Messages will be checked on a twice weekly basis.

BLACKHEATH HOSPITAL

There have been issues with noise from Blackheath Hospital for neighbours living in Hatcliffe Close. Noise officers from the London Borough of Lewisham have been involved and there are currently a number of discussions happening between neighbours, the hospital and LBL. BVRG will be writing to support neighbours in this area.

BLACKHEATH JOINT WORKING PARTY

The annual general meeting for BJWP will be held on 23rd February 2007 in the Blackheath Halls.

ADDITIONAL XMAS LIGHTS

Some of our members mentioned that there used to be Christmas lights on the tree at the corner of Lee Park with Lee Road which were not switched on this year. A member of our steering group got in touch with LBL's street furniture and lighting department and this was remedied.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED FOR BVRG STEERING GROUP

Please do get in touch with us if you can help with member communications including our newsletter and web site over the next few months. We'd also be interested in talking to any of you if you are keen to help with parking, licensing and other issues that affect the village.

BLACKHEATH VILLAGE LIBRARY

We have been assured by our councillors that the library is safe and assured for two more years at least. They are also planning to extend the hours and we will keep you in touch with any news about this.

Blackheath Village Residents' Group Limited

Chapman House, 10 Blackheath Village, London, SE3 9LE. bvrgroup@tiscali.co.uk Tel: 020 8143 4623
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