

# HIGHBURY FIELDS ASSOCIATION

NEWSLETTER MARCH 1978.

## ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

PLEASE KEEP THIS DATE FREE:-

Monday 20th March at 7.45 pm

Providence Baptist Chapel

### 1. PARKING. SOME PROGRESS BUT MORE TO BE DONE.



Since last summer we have been discussing three points with Islington Council.

a) Extra Parking Spaces - these were finally provided last Autumn.

b) Lifting Saturday Morning Restrictions. The Council has sent a proposal to the G.L.C. to lift these restrictions. Unfortunately the G.L.C. (whose approval is needed to implement this) could be a year in deciding. We are pressing them to respond sooner.

c) Visitors' Parking. The Council's Legal Dept. are currently working on a proposal of a scheme to allow visitors to park in Zone 5 (our area) and we are pressing this point.

### 2. TRAFFIC. DETAILED PLANS BUT NO INITIATING.



Traffic is also being discussed by our working party. A twenty page report was prepared by the Planning Dept on traffic movements through the Highbury Fields Area. It is dated 14th June 1977 and is available from the Planning Dept (tel 226-0231 extn 268).

After six inconclusive meetings some of us produced a plan (similar to the Planning Dept recommendations). The proposals concern Baalbec Ronalds, Horsell and Arvon Roads. Copies are available from Carrick James (226-7785) or Nigel Forrest (607-1164). Among many ideas two are now favoured by your Committee:- 1. Closing the road on Highbury Fields (by the lavatories) which joins Baalbec to Ronalds Road; no entry signs at Arvon and/or Horsell Roads from Drayton Park, and the closing of the road out of Highbury Place into Highbury Corner. 2. Slowing of traffic by experimental bumps and narrowing roads at vital points.

The Council wants to undertake further surveys but our draft plan proposes immediate action. DO YOU WANT A TRAFFIC SCHEME (to stop the rat-runs)? UNLESS WE GET SUPPORT LITTLE WILL HAPPEN. Please come to the A.G.M. to air your views.

### 3. TREES. Plans are in hand for planting assorted new trees to replace the latest Dutch Elms which had to be felled because of disease. In a year or two a new avenue is to be planted across the fields just north of Jubilee Walk.



### 4. HOUSING ACTION AREA. IS ANYONE INTERESTED?



The Ronalds Road area was declared a Housing Action Area at the beginning of this year. Further information is available from the Housing Action Area Advice Group at the Housing Department 229 Essex Road, N.1. (226-3300). Would you like to find out how the Council works? The Islington Bus Co. are holding a simple, practical session to do this on Sat. 4th March 10.00-2.00 Phone 603 0226 for more details.

5. CYCLING. It is proposed to allow cycling along Church Path, at the top end of Highbury Fields, which is at present for pedestrians only. The present path is about six metres wide, with railings on each side. The cycle path would occupy the west side of Church Path, bounded on one side by the railings and on the other by a continuous white line. The cycle path would be two metres wide.



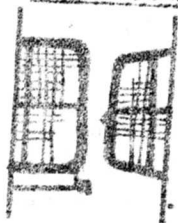
6. SKATEBOARDING. We understand that one of the paddling pools, by Highbury Fields' swimming pool, is being considered as an informal skateboard area. Your Committee supports this proposal and will report on the progress at the A.G.M.



7. JUBILEE WALK. Following the Queen's visit to Highbury Fields the Council has renamed the avenue of trees between Fieldway Crescent and Highbury Place "Jubilee Walk".



8. ROUNDHOUSE. Sabourin's premises in Ronalds Road are now likely to continue to house the Roundhouse Community Group. Present activities include the Youth Club, Boxing, Community Service Order work on Saturdays, and plans for Easter and Summer Holiday youth projects. Development plans for the site include a social club and bar, playgroup, and other community activities. Volunteers urgently needed!; to help clear the building, assist in youth club etc. Phone 609 0143.



9. Highbury Fields Local Pub. Fullers Brewery have responded favourably to the idea of extending their Off-Licence on the corner of Battledean and Ronalds Road into a Pub and Garden (backing onto Sabourin's Yard). H.F.A. have suggested that they should approach the G.L.C. who have plans for the area. Please sign the petition at the Off-Licence if you would like to add your support.



10. DATES FOR YOUR DIARY.



Scouts Fete - 16th-17th June  
Under Fives Play Day - 22nd June.  
Fair - 29th July to 4th August.

11. ISLINGTON AGE CONCERN is shortly to open the Age Concern Centre at 149 Rosebery Avenue, EC1 4QX (278-6994). They are looking for people, especially retired people who would be willing to help in a voluntary capacity, to help decorate etc. and to run the Centre when open.

12. ISLINGTON COMMITTEE FOR COMMUNITY RELATIONS, 314 Upper St., N.1. (226-2761) need volunteers to teach English (especially women volunteers), basic training and materials provided. If you speak English and are willing to commit yourself to one hour a week for at least six months please get in touch.

13. Pam Roberts, a local teacher, has written "an Urban Trail of the Holloway Road", a local studies pack for school children. It refers to Highbury Fields and Highbury Place and mentions the Highbury Fields Association.

# Highbury Fields Association



December 1978

## 1. WHAT IS THE HIGHBURY FIELDS ASSOCIATION ?

It is a grouping of local people interested in protecting and improving Highbury Fields and the bordering area. It was started 3½ years ago when there were plans which, if carried out, might have had a disastrous effect on the Fields.

There is no exclusive membership. Every year (normally in March) there is a general meeting to which everyone in the area is invited by leaflet. At that time, a committee is elected; and this committee meets every month or so throughout the year.

The H.F.A. is non-political. There is no regular subscription for membership.

This newsletter contains news on all the main subjects we have looked at since the last general meeting, in March. The present officers are :-

Chairman ; Mr. Bay Hodgson, 10 Highbury Place.  
Treasurer ; Ms. Mel Pidcock, 15 Highbury Terrace.  
Secretary ; Ms. Janet Grillet 43 Fieldway Crescent.

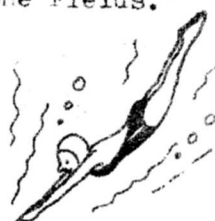
The H.F.A. welcomes the formation of other groups adjacent to the Fields. We will seek to work with such groups on local matters.

## 2. THE FUTURE OF THE SWIMMING POOL AND THE AREA ROUND IT

It is felt that the Swimming Pool and the Swings Complex needs altering and improvement.

An attempt is to be made in the New Year to get plans for two pools - one indoor and one outdoor. The present long pool must be altered, but the space for sun-bathing will be kept and if possible increased.

The swings area needs improving and being made safer.



3.



### TREES

The maple tree, which this Association is donating to Highbury Fields, is planned for this Autumn.

We had hoped to plant it in National Tree Week (11th - 19th November) - but because of the weather this was too early for tree-planting.

We are in touch with Mr. D. Watt, Islington Council's new Arboricultural Officer. A date will be arranged as soon as possible.

We would like to thank all those who have kindly contributed towards the tree.

....over.....

4. TRAFFIC

We have continued to press Islington Council for action.



The Council is calling a Public Meeting on the subject.

The Public Meeting will be at 8.00p.m. on Thursday 7th December 1978 at the Central Library (on the corner of Holloway Road and Fieldway Crescent).

If you haven't had a leaflet about it from the Council yet, you should get one soon.

When we heard that the public meeting was planned we had discussions with other local groups - the tenants' and owners' associations in the Ronalds Road Housing Action Area and representatives of Drayton Park School; to one of these discussions we invited our local councillors.

The Council's Planning Department had sent us 4 preliminary ideas as possible traffic schemes. Our four groups studied these but (as we reported to the Council at the end of October) found all of them unacceptable because they had these disadvantages: -

- (a) They would have caused a heavy amount of through-traffic round the Fields instead of, as at present, across them;
- (b) They would not have reduced the Highbury Place rat-run; and
- (c) They would not have given enough protection to the Ronalds Road area, nor to Benwell and Bryantwood Roads.

We suggested a scheme which, in the opinion of people from the 4 local groups, is better:-

- i) Close the road which divides the Fields;
- ii) Make Highbury Place and Highbury Crescent (where they meet, at the Highbury Corner end of the Fields) no entry from one into the other. Highbury Corner would still be accessible from each;
- iii) Narrow the mouth of Highbury Place where it goes into Highbury Corner;
- iv) Lay a zebra crossing near this point;
- v) Create slowing devices at danger-points in Baalbec Road, Highbury Place, Highbury Crescent, Ronalds Road and Bryantwood Road;
- vi) Lay a long, narrow traffic island along the centre of Drayton Park between the mouths of Arvon Road and Bryantwood Road;
- vii) Close Horsell Road at a point between Witherington and Ronalds Roads;
- viii) Make Benwell Road no entry southbound at a point near Bryantwood Road;
- ix) Introduce yellow lines alongside pavements near junctions outside the parking zone.

N.B. : there are ways of allowing emergency services (fire brigade, police and ambulances) through closed roads. We favour the raised ramp type used in Camden.

\*\*\*\*\*

If you have any questions or suggestions it would be best not to leave them until the Public Meeting. These are some people who may be able to help: -

H.F.A.

East of the Fields : Carrick James, 13 Baalbec Rd. 226-7785.  
On the Fields : Bay Hodgson, 10 Highbury Place 226-8393.  
West of the Fields : Janet Grillet, 43 Fieldway Cresc. 226-0746.

Islington Council

Mr. Sayeed Waheed, Planning Department, 227 Essex Road, N1.  
226-0231.

.....continued.....



It is difficult to devise a scheme which meets the several and partly conflicting needs : -

- reducing dangerous through-traffic (which also damages our environment ;
- letting through-traffic use adequate alternative routes ;
- allowing us access to and within our own area ;
- containing the speed of traffic and the effects of parking in our residential streets ; and
- avoiding any serious side-effects.

But after 1½ years of discussions about the principles and details of schemes, we believe that the main issues are clear and that it is time to take action.

5.



#### OPEN SPACE / VACANT LAND

- Between Highbury Crescent and Ronalds/Arvon/Melgund Roads (over rail tunnel)
- Between Arvon Road and Battledean Road (alongside the railway)

If the G.L.C. are only going to lease this area for 18 months, then little change can be made to this overgrown area.

The H.F.A. would like to see the corrugated iron fence removed from Highbury Crescent, and a wooden fence capable of being proof against dumping put in its place. The area could be tidied up and a path made through to Melgund and Arvon Roads.

The H.F.A. realizes that the Tenants' and Owners' Associations of the Ronalds Road HAA have a primary interest in the future of the land alongside the railway. In turn the H.F.A. has a primary interest in the Highbury Crescent end.

No doubt local residents who have not attended housing action area meetings may be keen to express different opinions. They should contact :-

PETE REDMAN

607 1804

6.

#### HIGHBURY ROUNDHOUSE

At last the G.L.C. has granted a long lease on Sabourins factory and house to this community group.

A sizeable grant from Partnership funds has been agreed; and architectural plans are in progress.

Meanwhile the present factory building has become a dangerous structure and is closed, probably until at least August 1979. Small outdoor activities are taking place, with Sabourins House as a base.

It is intended to provide ultimately a youth and community centre with special emphasis on youth, senior citizens, under 5's and a resident theatre group.

7.

#### CONSERVATION

Bay Hodgson and Peter Collymore have now completed their survey of the buildings in the Highbury area, filled in many forms and taken many photographs. These have been submitted to the Planning office which is in turn examining our proposals and drawing up their own local

## CONSERVATION      c o n t i n u e d

list of buildings of architectural and historic interest, incorporating some of our recommendations.

### HIGHBURY HOME

Highbury Home is made up of the first three houses in Highbury Terrace. It belongs to the Area Health Authority who, having decided it was a fire risk, arranged for all the old ladies who were living in the Home to be moved to other premises. That was over three years ago. Since then the property has been empty. It has been boarded up and is being regularly patrolled by a security group, but otherwise has had little or no time or money spent on it.

Three members of the Highbury Fields Association were able to visit the property recently, with a representative from the Area Health Authority. They found the ground floor and the first floor in fairly reasonable condition, but were dismayed to see the state of the basements and the top floors.

You may have seen a report in the Islington Gazette saying that vandals had damaged the property. Certainly some lead has been taken from the roof and some of the washbasins have been broken, but apart from that there is little direct evidence of vandalism. The main damage is being caused by two pipes leaking at a slow but steady rate in the basement, by a severe attack of dry rot in one of the houses and by the rain coming in through the damaged roof (including two broken skylights).

Unless something is done very quickly, the damage caused by the water, the rot and the rain will continue to grow until it becomes so bad that no one will have the money to repair the buildings at all!

The Area Health Authority say that the procedure for disposing of the property is long and complex, and since only the first steps have been taken so far, we feel that two or three more years could pass before it is completed - by which time it may be too late to save these houses!

They are listed as being of 'architectural and historical interest' and the Highbury Fields Association feels that such a building should not be allowed to steadily deteriorate, and that some way should be found to by-pass or cut through the lengthy procedure so that it can be sold or used in some way. If there is no evidence of any action being taken by the New Year we intend to inform John Grant, our M.P., of the whole sorry story.

### ISLINGTON ARCHEOLOGY & HISTORY SOCIETY

New Year Meetings to be held at the Marlborough Building, Polytechnic of North London, Nag's Head, Holloway Road, N7.  
(Buses: 4, 43, 104, 277, 279 and Holloway Road tube)

17th January - Caricatures - Finbar MacDonnell  
14th February - Neolithic Archeology - Ian Kinness  
14th March - Whatever happened to Islington's Squares and Terraces? - Mary Cosh.

