



**Beechwood** Community Hall

## **Newsletter - April 2009**

### *Welcome to the Beechwood Hall Newsletter*

*Well Easter is on us again and things are moving on with preparations for the Hall , albeit slowly. As you may have noticed over the last few weeks the kiddies play area is under construction and looks like it will be ready pretty soon.*

*Preparations for the handover of the Hall are underway with the MBC to hand it over to our management committee. The current date for the handover looks like it will be the end of June so we may even get a summer celebration !*

*Interest in the Hall still continues for a wide variety of activities which means that bookings will look very healthy.*

*Once again, Linda Sinclair, the local Neighbourhood Watch co-ordinator has very kindly provided an update for this issue and we intend to have this as a continuing part of the newsletter.*

*A happy Easter to you all.*

*Kind Regards*

*Nic Jefferys*

*[n.jefferys@beechwoodhall.org.uk](mailto:n.jefferys@beechwoodhall.org.uk)*





## ***Welcome to your Neighbourhood Watch Newsletter***

May I take this opportunity to welcome new residents to the area and to advise that if you have any comments, concerns or queries regarding the development, please do not hesitate to contact me at [lindasinclair@beechwoodnw.co.uk](mailto:lindasinclair@beechwoodnw.co.uk) or telephone (eves) 01622 721258 or 07929 268288 anytime.

Right, here we go:

### **Posting your letters**

Firstly, most of you will be aware we now have our own post box on the development, situated on the left-hand corner if you are walking into Marigold Way from Tarragon Road (shops end), next to the new play area. Thanks in particular to Lucy Miles on the development who I know campaigned steadily for this to be installed.

### **Play Area**

And talking of the play area, you will also have noticed this is being installed currently so hopefully we are nearly there now. As a little boy of around 9 who lives on the development asked the other day "Why aren't the men there every day. If they were, it would be finished by now and me and my brother could play in there?" Apparently he visits every day to see if further progress has been made. Well, we are getting there as I noticed the equipment has now been installed.

### **Community Hall**

Again, I am pleased to say we are getting there. I am informed the next step is for Maidstone Borough Council to advertise their intention to hand over the Hall to the Committee, and the handover should be "at the end of June". The Hall will then need to be fitted-out with necessary equipment (cups and saucers, chairs, tables, fridge etc) before it can be let. There is strong interest from potential bookers, and residents should be aware the Committee have decided they will not pursue an alcohol licence for the building, and will not accept bookings for wedding receptions, birthday parties etc. (Maybe toddlers parties? I will have to let you know on that score).

### **Recent Litter-pick**



As you will know, there was a litter-pick organised by Julia Batt a few of weeks ago. Unfortunately, although not there personally due to emergency veterinary duties, I am told it was a tremendous job done by a number of residents who obviously care a great deal about the look of the estate. Some people could just not make it, of course that is appreciated, but hopefully next time a few more will lend a hand because it certainly made a fantastic difference to the look of the development. Thank you to everyone and thank you to Julia for organising all the tools to do the job!

### **Car Parking**

Once again I have received a number of e-mails asking me to mention the parking on the development. Here are just a few:

".....if you could add a piece about people parking on the street overnight and not using their allocated parking bays. The estate is beginning to resemble a giant car-park, and while I can understand parking on the "other" side of the estate during the week in order not to negotiate the traffic in Tonbridge Road, reserved spaces should always be used at weekends. Principal offenders are people living in the flats in the corner of the square!"

"...I think it would be good to ask the residents to use their parking spaces and not blocking pavements. I have seen mothers with young children having to walk around cars which are blocking pavements."

"...the issue of on street parking - or lack of! - due to people avoiding parking charges at the hospital. As we discussed before, I would be interested in canvassing opinion as to whether there is support to enforce residents only parking on site."

There does seem to be this "don't care" attitude sometimes which is a shame because with just a little more consideration, the problem could at least be reduced. So please just give this some thought and let us have your comments and/or experiences. Thank you.

### **Discarding cigarette ends**

Following the recent litter-pick, I was also asked to mention in the next newsletter about residents who do not wish to smoke in their own homes but feel it is acceptable to flick cigarette ends out onto the street from their front gardens. After a while, these do add up and look unsightly. At the end of the day this is also litter, so please if you do this, could you please endeavour to clear these up every now and then. Let's keep the neighbourhood looking nice, because it does look nice most of the time.

### **First of 2 recent messages from Kent Police:**

1) "This message is to alert all members to a van that has been in the Allington area collecting Charity bags which have been left on doorsteps.

This van is not registered with the charities that are officially collecting in the Maidstone area, and any items they pick up will be sold on for their own gain.



The van registration number is YE04 VWS, it is a white Transit van. Be cautious as they may use another vehicle. All drivers from registered charities should have an official ID badge and if you are at all concern about the driver you could call the charity to check them out."

2) "Police in Maidstone are warning homeowners of car key burglaries. A new trend is emerging locally where high value cars are being stolen from driveways, after burglars break into homes and steal the car keys.

We believe criminal gangs are coming in to Kent from outside of the county to committing these offences. Many of the homes being targeted are in Vinters Park, Grove Green, Pennenden Heath and Weaving, where we believe the offenders come in off the motorway to commit these crimes.

We have already made a number of key arrests, but we would like to issue a warning to homeowners to be particularly careful when locking their doors. In a number of cases, the targets for these burglars have been homes with UPVC doors where although the door appears locked on the outside, it is not. To combat this, we would recommend that homeowners with this type of door, ensure that it has been double locked, which will make it a lot harder for burglars to gain access."

The increases seen in these types of burglary in Maidstone are being linked to the nationwide economic downturn and also because of improved car security, as many vehicles now cannot be stolen without the keys.

If you have any information on this or any other crime please call Mid Kent Maidstone Police on 01622 690055"

**Hyde Housing Residents (Apartments above shops)**  
**Message from Carole Chapman, Housing Officer:**

"Parking enforcement is now in operation for all parking bays demised to Hyde at Sandlewood Court (all the bays are marked with an H followed by a number), which is starting to ensure successful resident access to our parking bays. All bays behind the shops are either demised to Hyde or the retailers and their staff. Regretfully, there are no spaces available for visitors to local shops, excepting Tesco, who have their own allocated parking area.

If you visit the area, please ensure that Hyde parking bays are kept clear at all times and are not blocked by double-parking.

There has been some evidence of anti-social behaviour by youths outside our blocks and in other local areas, including Marigold Way. Please report all incidents to the Police on 01622 690690 in confidence or "Crimestoppers" on 0800 555 111. Your local Police Community Support Officer, Neil Denney also patrols the area regularly and I am trying to arrange for a police CCTV camera to be erected if the problems continue.

I am also arranging to have the area of loose stones in Marigold Way to be replaced with paving slabs or similar. Please report any incidents of stone throwing/damage to property to the Police in the meantime.

Carole Chapman, Housing Officer, Hyde Housing Association"



Additionally, if residents would like to be included in a future meeting together with Retailers, Police and Hyde Housing to discuss and address any ongoing concerns, please telephone or e-mail me. (Linda)

## **Recycling plans affecting us by May 2009**

### **Additional Grey Wheelie Bin**

You may recall from an earlier newsletter that MBC are planning to introduce an additional grey wheelie bin for recycling rubbish. I am informed this will now take effect from May this year.

For further information on the borough's recycling scheme, please go to the following website:  
[http://www.digitalmaidstone.co.uk/environment/waste\\_and\\_recycling/new\\_collection\\_service.aspx](http://www.digitalmaidstone.co.uk/environment/waste_and_recycling/new_collection_service.aspx)

However, if you prefer to make a telephone call or e-mail directly with any questions or queries, contact: Jodie Sargent, Customer Service Officer, Environmental Services, 01622 602500 or e-mail

[JodieSargent@Maidstone.gov.uk](mailto:JodieSargent@Maidstone.gov.uk)

### **Recycle your cooking oil! Did you know that..**

#### **1000 litres of used cooking oil could power the average house for one year? No, I didn't either!**

In the past, much of the UK's used cooking oil was just dumped in landfill sites or down sinks and drains. However, this is no longer acceptable – EU Landfill Directive and subsequent UK Landfill Regulations.

Caterers are legally required to dispose of used oil through registered and licensed collectors – or risk facing large fines.

It is now possible to recycle and purify used cooking oil without any chemicals or supplements. This recycled fuel is LF100 and can be used to generate clean electricity. Used cooking oil has been used in the past as a biodiesel but has only worked with the addition of chemicals which can be harmful to the environment.

The use of used cooking oil in electricity generation reduces carbon emissions meaning that everyone can play a part in building Britain's renewable energy capacity.

So, if you want to know more, I have a couple of documents that have been kindly forwarded to me which I can e-mail to you – just let me have your e-mail address, or alternatively, log onto the KCC website where you will find a wealth of useful information on the subject plus there is a cool BBC News Channel video you should watch.

<http://www.kent.gov.uk/environment/recycling-rubbish-and-waste/recycling/cooking-oil.htm>

In the future we will all have to recycle, so we may as well begin embracing the subject now, if you haven't already.



**Beauty Salon (last remaining retail outlet)**

Still no news as to when this is opening unfortunately. There have been delays, however, I am assured it will definitely be happening "in the not too distant future".

Kind regards

Linda

