



Sopwell Residents Association

NEWSLETTER

Issue 12
Spring 2008

Welcome

Welcome to the Spring edition of our newsletter - the first issue for which I am responsible. Previously this role was undertaken by Chantal Burns who did a sterling job for which we have been very grateful. This issue contains many useful snippets of information which we hope you will find interesting and useful as well as information on community events such as the AGM, Larks in the Parks and the annual litter pick. So please put these dates in your diary NOW. Sandy Norman .

AGM 21st May 2008 - 5th anniversary - Herts Highways - Old photos of Sopwell

Can you believe it, the SRA has now been in existence for five long years! A lot of ground has been covered since we started in 2003. We hope to celebrate this special anniversary at our AGM in May. It will be held on Wednesday 21st May at 7.30pm at the Marlborough Pavilion, Old Oak, Cottonmill Lane. We are trying to make it a memorable occasion so please do come along and enjoy yourselves. Because

of all the problems with damaged pavements and potholes in Sopwell, we have approached someone from Herts Highways to speak so there should be an interesting discussion. We are also looking to find old photos of Sopwell which hopefully we can put up on display. If you have any which we could use please contact us. If anyone requires transport please let us know.

Larks in the Parks 29th June - Sopwell has talent

All Sopwell residents are invited to this year's 'Larks in the Parks' community event which will be held on Sunday 29th June between 12 - 5pm in and around the Marlborough Pavilion, just off Cottonmill Lane. This is an opportunity for the whole Sopwell community to get together, bring a picnic and enjoy entertainment for all the family. We're hoping to build on last year's great success and see even more of you on the day! As always, there will be a variety of acts performing and there will be activities for the children. Entry to the event is free so come along and bring your friends and family. We are hoping for a BMX demonstration as well as the highlight of the SOPWELL HAS TALENT competition.

DO YOU HAVE A TALENT?

Can you sing? Are you a magician? Are you a comedian? If you are any of the above or have any talent and have an ambition to perform in front of hundreds of people and you live in Sopwell, then we are looking for YOU!! If you would like to enter please call Adam on 07989 435651 for more information.

We are also looking for local volunteers before and during the day. If you're a resident who can contribute with any kind of entertainment, an activity or just help on the day, please get in touch. You can contact us via email larks@sopwell.org.uk, get in touch with the SRA secretary or visit our website on www.sopwell.org.uk/larks for pictures of last years' event and more information about the day as the programme gets confirmed.

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Adopting St Albans Abbey Station

Do you use the Abbey Flyer on a regular basis? Are you willing to keep an eye on it and report any problems once a week or so? We are looking to find a few people who could be part of a team monitoring the condition of the Abbey station. The Abbey Community Rail Partnership wants the local community to “adopt” all the stations along this route as part of a programme of turning round unstaffed and uncared stations in order to bring them into the heart of the community. This in turn encourages better use of public transport. Most of the stops have already been adopted but no group has come forward to adopt the Abbey station until now. The Sopwell Residents Association has agreed to help out.

There are two types of station adoption: the first is for station monitors to act as the “eyes and ears” and regularly report problems to the train operating company; and the second is to undertake a variety of activities which would improve the look of the station e.g. provision of garden plants and bulbs etc. At present we are just looking to be station monitors and if this proves successful we will look into greater involvement. The role is not at all onerous and should not take more than a few minutes.

So if you are a regular Flyer commuter and want to help or if you want more information please contact us and we can coordinate a team of helpers. We will also raise this at the AGM in May.

New 10 to 3 Club for older people in Sopwell

Age Concern Hertfordshire and Age Concern St Albans are working in partnership to deliver a new service to older people in Sopwell. A 10 - 3 club is held at Betty Entwistle House, Holyrood Crescent. Members enjoy a

welcoming environment with activities and entertainment. A hot meal and refreshments are available to buy and transport can be arranged for those that need it. Further details from the club supervisor on 839963.

Volunteering with Hertfordshire Constabulary

Do you want to learn more about policing in Hertfordshire or have a passion for helping out in your local community? If so, why not join the growing team of dedicated Police Community Volunteers. We have volunteering opportunities across the county which will enable you to get involved in projects and help make the county a safer place. More than 65 people in Hertfordshire have already signed up to the scheme. If you have just a few hours to spare each week or month, there are opportunities available in your local Station. Chief Constable Frank Whiteley said: “Volunteers are an important part of the extended police family and are making a huge contribution to the services we offer the community. Volunteering is a great opportunity to become more involved with policing in your community, put your skills to good use or even learn new ones. Your time will be spent assisting teams of highly dedicated officers and staff with community-related tasks and you can fit volunteering around the hours that suit you.”

Volunteers are not a replacement for police officers and staff but help the Constabulary provide an enhanced service to the community. Some of the tasks available are: administrative, organising Community meetings, telephone enquiries, internet/intranet research, updating internal/external records, leaflet production/or distribution and newsletter collation.

As well as the opportunity to give something back to the community, volunteering:

looks great on your CV; gives you the chance to brush up on your interpersonal skills and allows you to gain confidence in a professional environment; is a chance to work with a team of dedicated people; and is a chance to find out more about your local police force.

To find out more about local volunteering opportunities please contact: Tracey Troy the Volunteer Co-ordinator on 01727 796097 tracey.troy@herts.pnn.police.uk

150th anniversary of Abbey Flyer

The year 2008 marks the 150th year of the St Albans to Watford Branch Line. Now known as the Abbey Line or the Abbey Flyer, it is well-used and well-loved by many local residents in Sopwell. ABFLY (the Rail User Group) and the Abbey Line Community Rail Partnership are planning some celebrations this year to commemorate this historic occasion. At the time of going to press, not all details have been finalised but we can share the following information.

We are currently planning to have festivities on Bank Holiday Monday 5th May, 2008, the actual anniversary of the opening of the Abbey Line. We plan to hold an exhibition at the St Stephen's Parish Centre and a fun fair in Bricket Wood to commemorate Henry Gray's original fun fair established in 1889. A miniature railway has been secured. There will also be a set of commemorative postcards and tickets available to those who come to the exhibition. We aim to run a special train on the Abbey Line that day. There are a few other activities

being planned at St Albans and at Watford, these details will be announced at a later date.

In the run up to the official day, we are planning to hold a Victorian Music Hall about the Abbey Line on Saturday 26th of April at 3 pm at the Abbey Theatre. There are also tentative plans to sell a commemorative ale to celebrate the 150th birthday of the Abbey Line in early April. There may be some local lectures in April and possibly a guided walk along paths near the line in the summer. For more information about any of these events, please refer to posters at the stations nearer the date or the CRP newsletter. To get your own copy of the CRP newsletter, you can become a member of ABFLY (the Abbey Line's rail user group). The website for ABFLY is <http://www.abfly.org.uk> and the website for the Abbey Line is <http://www.abbeyline.org.uk>

Sopwell and Verulam Children's Centre

Your local Children's Centre for Sopwell and Verulam is now in its last stages of building works and due to be completed in March. It will provide information about local services for children under 5 and their families and is based at Mandeville School on Mandeville Drive. Once all the fixtures and fittings are in place an opening event will be held in the summer term. Any information about forthcoming events will be advertised in the local papers. If you have any queries about services for children under 5's or you wish to share information that could benefit your local community, please feel free to phone 850560 or email: kathryn.puddy@watlingview.herts.sch.uk.

St Albans Toy Library is back!

St Albans Toy Library is now up and running once again at St Julian's Church Hall, Abbots Avenue West (off Cottonmill Lane). Catering for children from birth to eight, the library has a wide selection of toys to lend, including outdoor and special needs toys. Special rates apply for childminders and those in receipt of benefits. The

library provides a great place for local parents and carers to meet and enjoy a free cup of tea or coffee while children play and enjoy craft activities. Annual membership is £4 and toys can be borrowed for 1 to 2 weeks from between 25p to £1. Open every Tuesday during term time, from 10am to 12 noon.

Annual litter pick

Every year the SRA takes part in the St Albans Litter Pick week and over the past five years we have collected loads of rubbish which has been dropped by anti-social litter louts. Litter picking in Sopwell this year will be on 5th and 6th April. On Saturday 5th April, we are meeting outside Mandeville school between 2-4pm and on Sunday 6th April we will do our usual litter pick at Sopwell Priory. We plan to meet by the benches opposite the ruins at 2pm. Please come and join us on either date to help us in our quest to make Sopwell a cleaner place to live. All equipment will be provided. You cannot miss us as we will be wearing our Hi-vis vests! Contact us for further information if necessary.

Don't forget to report litter and fly tipping when you see it. Litter hotline: 0845 125800 or a.cleanerdistrict@stalbans.gov.uk . Also there is www.communityfix.co.uk which uses maps to help pinpoint the location of any complaint.

Planting trees

The SRA is committed to improving the environment around Sopwell and we are working with the Council to plant more trees in the streets. If you wish to plant a tree in your street, phone the Trees and Woodlands Section of the Council on 01727 819372. They have launched a voluntary Tree Wardens Scheme and two of your committee have joined up – watch this space!

Pavements and potholes

Some of the roads and pavements in Sopwell are in a sorry state. The problem is that unless someone complains about them, nothing is done by the Highways department as they are not inspected regularly for faults. Residents of Tavistock Avenue recently sent in a petition complaining about the state of the pavements and Herts Highways agree that there are faults to be remedied. Other roads have also been highlighted. So if you have cause to complain please contact 01438 737320 or log on to the website: www.hertsdirect.org/highwayfaults .

Salaam Parent & Toddler Group

সালাম পিয়ারেন্টস এন্ড টোল্ডার গ্রুপ

at

St Julian's Church Hall

সেন্ট জুলিয়ান চার্চ হল

Abbott's Avenue, St Albans

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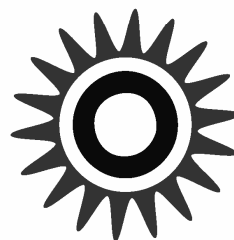
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