



January 2012

# The Citizen

Newsletter of the Berkhamsted Citizens Association

Working for the social and civic life of our community

## Annual General Meeting

NOTICE is hereby given that the 87<sup>th</sup> Annual General Meeting of the Berkhamsted Citizens Association will be held in the Great Hall of the Town Hall, Berkhamsted on

**Thursday 8<sup>th</sup> March 2012  
at 8 p.m.**

Nominations for the posts of:

- Chairman
- Vice-Chairman
- Hon. Treasurer
- Hon. Secretary
- Hon. Membership Secretary and
- Committee Members

should be submitted to the Hon. Secretary (Miranda Cummins, 27 North Road, Berkhamsted HP4 3DU) in writing not later than 24 hours before the AGM. Consent of the person nominated must be obtained previously.

### Agenda

- 1 Apologies for absence
- 2 Minutes of the AGM held on 10<sup>th</sup> March 2011
- 3 Chairman's Report
- 4 Hon Treasurer's Report
- 5 Election of Officers
- 6 Election of Committee Members
- 7 Appointment of Independent Examiners of Accounts
- 8 Any other business

The present Committee would warmly welcome other members to join them, and look forward to additional nominations for committee members. The six-weekly Committee meetings last for around two hours, and we have in addition two regular sub-committees. The Town Amenities Sub-Committee (TASC) works hard to try to ensure that changes made to the built and general environment, both in Berkhamsted and Northchurch, are for the better. It meets monthly. The Activities & Publicity Sub-Committee, which meets as and when required, plans and organises a programme of talks, walks and other events. It often does most of its business on email or phone. There are members who serve on the sub-committees who are not on the main Committee. This arrangement suits those who have a particular interest. All meetings are held in committee members' homes. In addition the BCA is represented on a number of local bodies such as the Berkhamsted Arts Trust, Town Hall Trust and the Friends of Rectory Lane Cemetery. There is something for everybody's interests when you join the BCA Committee; and a way to involve yourself in public life.

*Following the formal business of the night there will be a short break to include wine or soft drinks and nibbles, courtesy of the Association. Then the following:*

### Environment Awards 2011

There were a number of contenders for the Environment Award, covering a wide variety of development and all completed by the end of 2011. The selected sites to be illustrated are listed in the pages of this newsletter.

### Guest Speaker

As we go to press, we hope to have a speaker from Royal Mail to talk about the recent closure of the Sorting Office and the arrangements in place for the public to retrieve undelivered post.

**Open Forum** This will finish proceedings, we hope in a lively fashion.

Views expressed are not necessarily those of the Association.

Contributions and comments to: Katy Brookes-Duncan  
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[k.b-d@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:k.b-d@hotmail.co.uk)

Published by the  
Berkhamsted Citizens Association ©  
Printed by Strong's Printing Services tel: 878592

## CHAIRMAN'S COLUMN

*Susan Johnson*

I will be writing an Annual Report for the AGM so will keep my powder dry for now. But I have a plea. **We need new Committee members**; particularly people willing to help with jobs. Please consider joining us! It's not too onerous if activities are shared out. And you get to be involved in everything that's going on in the town. We have a wide remit!

## Environment Award 2011

*Paul Crosland*

During the past year, members of the Town Amenities Sub-committee (TASC) have assembled a list of developments in the built environment of Berkhamsted and Northchurch. These varied in scale enormously. Refurbished buildings were considered alongside new ones – the only criterion being that the works were completed in 2011.

From this list a 'short' list for the Award is agreed. Then the Sub-Committee members independently complete a scoring matrix on the basis of design, compatibility with environment, quality of construction and benefit to the community. At their final meeting before the AGM, TASC agrees on recommendations to the main Committee for the Awards.

The winners of the BCA Environment Award, if any, will be revealed at the BCA Annual General Meeting on 8<sup>th</sup> March 2012.

The final 'short' list that TASC will consider for the Award and/or Commendations is as follows:



Dell Court, Stag Lane

1. *Aspley Lodge & Byeways, Chesham Road/The Chimes, Acacia Grove, Chesham Road*  
A development of three detached/ semi-detached houses on a corner plot
2. *47 Bridgewater Road*  
Demolition and reconstruction of detached house on corner plot
3. *Archive Mews, Kingshill Way (BFI site)*  
Conversion of Grade II listed buildings into 9 residential units
4. *Meadway*  
Development of new home
5. *Window replacements in Shrublands Avenue*  
Replacement of metal windows with timber sashes in the conservation area
6. *'Highview', Ivy House Lane*  
Demolition and reconstruction of detached house on the north side of the town
7. *'Laurel Cottage', Bank Mill*  
Construction of new bungalow on a constricted site adjacent to the railway line
8. *Rivington Gardens, Tring Road, Northchurch*  
Construction of new detached houses on the edge of Northchurch
9. *Darrs Lane/Seymour Road, Northchurch*  
Construction of three terraced houses on the corner
10. *The Bramptons, Shootersway Lane*  
Construction of two new detached houses
11. *The Nash Harris Building, Berkhamsted Collegiate School, Kings Road*  
A two-storey extension at the rear of the Kings Road campus
12. *Cowslip Meadow, off Springfield Road*  
A development of two and three storey houses on a sloping site
13. *Dell Court, Stag Lane*  
Flats at the entrance to the Stag Lane development
14. *New Manor Croft, Manor Street*  
Development on the former Social Services offices site

## Best Christmas Shop Window

*Susan Johnson*

Now in its 14<sup>th</sup> year, the presentation of the awards for the best Berkhamsted Christmas Shop Windows 2011 were made at the **Berkhamsted Festival of Light**. The event was a great success with thousands of people crowding the High Street. The BCA praised the shopkeepers for keeping up standards and making the effort to brighten the town centre in these tough economic times.

The winner this year was **Zen** the hairdressers; with certificates of commendation going to **Temptation** and **Home & Colonial** (all of the High Street), and **The Berkeley Gallery** in Lower Kings Road.

## Queen's Jubilee

*Susan Johnson*

The Town Council has set up a Working Party to coordinate efforts to celebrate the Jubilee. The BCA is represented on it and will do what it can to help. Meanwhile we are considering planting an oak to mark the event. What do you think?

## BCA's New Website

We have a new website - do let us know what you think!

[www.berkhamstedcitizens.org.uk](http://www.berkhamstedcitizens.org.uk)

## Norman Williams

It is with sadness we mark the death of Norman Williams on 17<sup>th</sup> December 2011 at the age of 94. He served on the Committee for 33 years to 2006, twice as Chairman.

Norman was a solicitor, a distinguished army officer, civil servant (he was appointed Companion Order of the Bath) and a great asset to the BCA, of which he was made a Life Member. Several members of the current Committee attended his funeral.

## Newsletter Consultation

Your committee would like to know your opinion on how - and how often - you would like to receive your newsletter. We have no intention of withdrawing the option of having a printed copy delivered to your door, four times per year. However, many people prefer to have newsletters available electronically – either by e-mail or via a web-link. This saves paper, and also saves us printing costs !

The 'default option' is 'no change' i.e. receive paper newsletters through your door. However, if you wish to receive newsletters electronically, please advise, Christopher Talbot-Ponsonby: [christopher@talbot-ponsonby.org](mailto:christopher@talbot-ponsonby.org)

E-mail addresses will be maintained confidentially by the BCA. They will not be disclosed to other members or made available to third parties under any circumstances.

Berkhamsted Citizens Association | Conservation and improvement of Berkhamsted, Northchurch and - Windows: Internet Explorer

http://www.berkhamstedcitizens.org.uk

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Conservation and improvement of Berkhamsted, Northchurch and the surrounding countryside

Berkhamsted is changing. The changes will affect you.

If you want to know what is going on in your area and have a say in its future [JOIN US](#)

You will be joining an organisation which takes an active part in the conservation and improvement of Berkhamsted, Northchurch and the surrounding countryside.

The Association is currently:

- leading the way in stimulating interest in our historic built environment.
- encouraging good practice and design in new building.
- promoting leisure use of the countryside while advocating its protection.
- working with local authorities and other groups to:
  - improve leisure facilities
  - promote the conservation area
  - implement town improvements
  - support improvements of the canal and its features

The Association inspects planning applications – commenting and objecting as appropriate.

The Berkhamsted Citizens Association will keep you in the picture with:

- quarterly newsletters
- ad hoc meetings on matters of public concern

The Association also organises:

- meetings with guest speakers

RECENT POSTS

- High Street Pavements Initiative
- Street Lighting in Berkhamsted
- Annual General Meeting
- Best Dressed Christmas Shop Window Competition

RECENT COMMENTS

ARCHIVES

- January 2012
- December 2011

CATEGORIES

- BCS News
- Roads
- Town News

## Town Amenities Sub-Committee

*Paul Crosland, Chairman*

In the past three months, the Town Amenities Sub-Committee (TASC) has maintained the Association's stance of opposing on principle the 'South Berkhamsted Concept' – the proposed satellite housing development on lands between the current limit of housing on the south side of the town, and the A41 by-pass – as the BCA campaigns to preserve Green Belt. The developers set up 'workshops', held at the King's Arms in September, at which they announced that, as part of a new proposal, the number of houses were being reduced by 20% to 800, and also included a new vehicular access from Fieldway. The increased traffic, congestion and pressure on infrastructure were not adequately addressed, however, and remain of much concern to the BCA.

TASC responded to the recent consultation phase of the DBC Core Strategy, by 'objecting' to the Council's proposals for the 'Egerton Rothesay' field in Shootersway on the basis of a lack of suitable infrastructure planning and provision.

The Government's Localism Bill was enacted in mid-November 2011. One of the corner-stones of this Act is to give local residents a say in local planning via Neighbourhood Plans. The BCA is lobbying the Town Council – who are responsible for instigating such Plans – to formulate a strategy for involving local residents and community groups in the planning process for Berkhamsted. This is seen as particularly important in view of the GUI proposal.

TASC is actively supporting proposals by the Town Council to set up a survey of the High Street pavements and footways, with the aim of getting the highways authority, Herts County Council, to fix them. The BCA is providing manpower to assist the Town Council survey. If you see any faults, please report these to the Town Warden.

TASC continues to review all planning proposals made to Dacorum Borough Council in its capacity as planning authority. Our comments and objections are supplementary to, and independent of, those made at regular Town Council Planning Committee meetings. TASC does not generally comment on domestic planning proposals, other than where these affect the Conservation Area, Green Belt or the AONB. We have noted the revised proposals for the Grey House site in Kitsbury Road, which we view as an improvement over previous proposals. Our position has been, and is, not to object to infill development here, although we have made suggestions as to how the plans could be improved. We have recently objected to development proposals for the rear of 328 High Street on the grounds of 'tandem' development and lack of suitable vehicular access; and to proposals for the Old Orchard, which overlooks the conservation area and the grounds of Rectory Lane Cemetery.

It is now almost six months since Berkhamsted lost its Royal Mail delivery office, with operations now being centred on Hemel Hempstead. We have not given up

hope of restoring a mail collection facility, either at the Post Office (at the Way Inn) or elsewhere. We attended a meeting with a Town Councillor and the MD of the Post Office franchise in October to examine possibilities. We would like to know your experiences and opinions on this subject. Do you think the restoration of a collection point is worthwhile cause for the BCA to pursue? Are you happy with the alternative delivery arrangements put in place by Royal Mail? Please let me know at [peejaycee@yahoo.com](mailto:peejaycee@yahoo.com)

## BCA Activities

*Katy Brookes-Duncan*

There have been three events since the last newsletter. On 13th October Lindy and Mischa Weinreb introduced Dee TV, a new online TV station for Dacorum. They explained the philosophy behind the station and the audience was able to watch some of the films available, playing 'spot the familiar face!' See for yourselves at <http://www.deetv.tv/> I must say how very grateful I am to Paul Chambers (*who else? Ed.*) for helping to sort the sound out at an hour's notice - he's my hero! I also had a crisis at the second event I organised for the BCA on 10th November. (I hope this won't be a theme!) The speaker from the County Council pulled out at a few days' notice; but many thanks to Councillor Ian Reay who stepped in and ensured that a good discussion about school places was possible. We had lots of new faces at that event and have made some useful links. Notes of the meeting can be viewed on our website. Finally on New Year's Day Paul Crosland led the traditional ramble to Aldbury with a stop at a public house for lunch. Our next event is on 9th February when Nancy Reid, the Warden at College Lake, Bulbourne will talk about the wildlife there. On 12th April you can find out how the venues and events for the Olympics will have a lasting benefit for the UK

## Membership Counts

*Christopher Talbot-Ponsonby*

We have had a good year with 26 households joining us. Welcome to you all! We did not have an 'end of year' Newsletter in 2011 so **renewal reminders** are being sent out now. Of our 401 households, 200 will have a renewal slip enclosed with this newsletter. The subscription remains at **£5 per household per year**. We have maintained this rate since January 2004, which represents great value. If you were to consider paying a **three year subscription (£15)**, it would make my life all that much easier this time next year.

Please ask a friend and or a neighbour if they are members. If not encourage them to join by sending me £5 (or even £15!) along with their name and address.

Finally, I would like to say a very big thank you to all the deliverers whom we are apt to take for granted for both delivering and, on many occasions, collecting the subscriptions as well.