

SRA Shortlands Residents' Association **NEWSLETTER**

Winter 2024
www.shortlandsra.org.uk

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING – Wednesday, 10th APRIL 2024

This year's AGM will be held at St Mary's Church Hall, starting at 8pm.

We shall cover the usual reports on our activities and finances before focussing on the main theme of "Planning and Development", but we shall also cover key current local issues like

Shortlands Station lifts, road safety, Queensmead Playground and the future of Shortlands Village.

As SRA members this is a great chance to raise issues with us and our local Councillors which directly affect you or are of the greatest concern to the community.

Please come along and join us

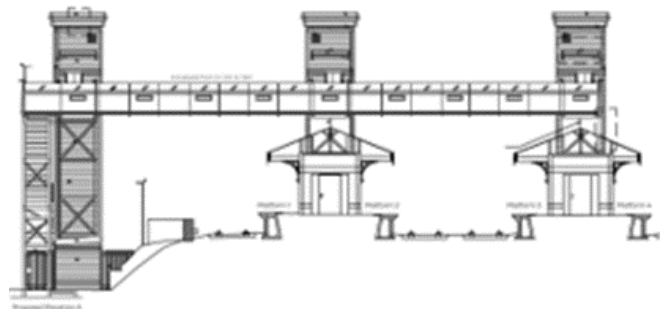
SHORTLANDS STATION LIFTS

By the time we go to press work should have finally started on the provision of the lifts long-promised for Shortlands Station to improve access to and from the platforms for local passengers, especially the disabled and vulnerable and parents with young children.

At a presentation given by Network Rail and their project engineers Bam Nuttall just before Christmas we learnt that the installation work will probably take up to 52 weeks, ending in the Spring of 2025. Much of the groundwork will be done in the coming Spring and Summer and the lifts themselves will start to be installed in the Autumn.

A new electricity substation will need to be built to meet the power upgrade required by the lifts. This is to be sited in the station car park near the present cycle store. Cyclists will have to take their bikes through the booking hall to an area close to the lift serving the bridge some 25m away. There is also intended to be some 'landscaping' involving plants nearby, but it is not yet clear what form that will take.

The SRA is still extremely concerned about the width of the lift doors because they have been considerably reduced and will not accommodate double buggies. The internal size of the lifts has also been reduced to simplify construction. Therefore, we are currently in discussion with Network Rail



about the lift capacity and door width. Another drawback to the latest design is that passengers using the lifts will be required to use two lifts instead of one as originally intended and to walk 25m from the booking hall to the first lift. On the plus side, we now know that the three towers in the design will be clad with bricks matching the colour and banding of those in the present station structure.

We are also enquiring whether Bam Nuttall are willing to provide funds for community projects around Shortlands Village, as they have in Petts Wood, where they have previously installed station lifts.

The full presentation is available to view on our website home page, under "Local News". We shall continue to keep you posted as more information emerges.



DEVELOPMENT

Bromley Town Centre

For some years now there have been plans to develop the site parallel to Bromley High Street, between **Ringers Road and Ethelbert Road**. The most recent planning application proposed two blocks of 14- and 12-storeys to provide 94 flats with no car parking facilities save for two disabled places. There would have been 250 cycle spaces. This application has been refused.

These are the summary reasons: –

- insufficient affordable housing
- insufficient larger family units of 3 bedrooms or more
- over-intensive development in a confined site. This could cause harm to the character of the area and fail to preserve or enhance the setting of the Bromley Town Centre conservation area
- there would be a poor outlook from the flats themselves, compromised internal layouts and inadequate provision of play areas
- the development would be overbearing when viewed from nearby residential properties.

In addition, there were concerns from the Fire Brigade about evacuation lift arrangements.

A proposed development at **33-41 Masons Hill**, refused by the Local Authority, went to appeal. The appeal was rejected by the inspector. This would have involved a part 8- part 11-storey building very close to the Perigon Heights and Waitrose developments. As we know, the Waitrose area itself is the subject of a current major development proposal. If approved, the development would have provided 50 residential units and commercial space on the ground floor. The main reason for refusing the application was the closeness of this development to a culverted part of the River Ravensbourne and the risk of flooding. Given the recent huge amounts of rainfall this would seem to be a significant argument.

Car parking in larger developments

Most of the larger proposed developments make no provision for car parking save for disabled parking spaces. SRA has argued that there is inadequate consideration of infrastructure demands alongside these large-scale developments and that to assume that the occupiers of the large number of flats

(for example over 350 flats in the proposed Waitrose/John Lewis scheme) will have no cars to park is unrealistic. Pressure would be put on local roads, already struggling with parking issues. One way in which Bromley Planners have tried to deal with this problem is to impose a planning and parking restriction as follows: “No resident shall be granted a resident’s parking permit within any controlled parking zones”. Whether that would solve the problem we are unsure.

ROAD SAFETY OPEN MEETING

Our first Open Meeting on Road Safety and the State of our Roads in and around Shortlands in November proved a really lively and well attended event with everyone strongly putting across their specific concerns.

Councillor Adam Grant and local police Chris Brown and Adam Charles joined us to highlight their priorities and try to answer the many questions and points raised. Local zebra crossings were much discussed, both the new one on Station Road and the one right in the middle of the Village, including calls for more and better advance signage. Also debated were speeding on some of our key local roads, potholes, traffic lights and flows around the station, bad or illegal parking, as in Kingswood Road near Harris Primary Academy where we held the meeting, and the problems raised by the volume of falling leaves in the Autumn.

Councillor Grant agreed to look into a number of the issues raised and get back to us. Finally, the meeting provided the stimulus for setting up the proposed SRA Road Safety Working Group, which is due to hold its first meeting later this month, with several new volunteers coming forward to join. A full record of the meeting is accessible via the www.shortlandsra.org.uk home page.

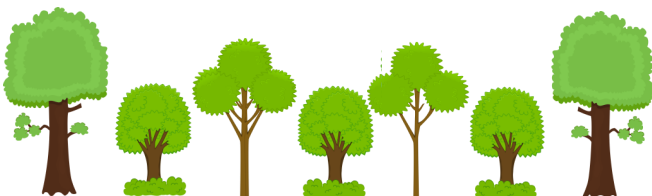
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**ALGERNON BLACKWOOD CBE
(1869–1951)**

Algernon Henry Blackwood moved to Shortlands House (now Bishop Challoner School) when he was 11 years old, where his escapades included climbing out of the window at night to set a boat afloat on the garden pond according to his 1923 autobiography, “Episodes Before Thirty”. His father was Sir Stevenson Arthur Blackwood, KCB, Secretary to the Post Office. After studying agriculture at Edinburgh University, Algernon moved to Toronto, then to New York, working as an editorial assistant on the Methodist Magazine, a dairy farmer, a publican and a court reporter. He also began writing short stories, which were published on his return to England when he was 30. During WW1 he served as an undercover agent in Switzerland for British military intelligence. Algernon published over 40 books and collaborated on several plays. He became one of the UK’s top supernatural fiction authors and when his novel, “A Prisoner in Fairyland” (1913), was dramatized as “The Starlight Express”, Sir Edward Elgar composed the music. In 1936 Algernon worked on “Picture Page,” Britain’s first television show and became a household name in 1947 telling ghostly tales on the BBC’s 15-minute closing programme, “Saturday Night Story”.



MEMBERSHIP

We are now entering the New Year when a number of exciting new projects will be under way both in and around Shortlands, including the installation of the lifts at Shortlands Station, the regeneration of Queensmead Playground and the work of the new SRA Road Safety Working Group. We shall also be looking at ways to mark SRA’s 90th anniversary later this year. Your continuing support is needed, not only as a member paying a £5 annual subscription, but as a Road Liaison Officer and/or Committee member.

I personally have found being a Liaison Officer an extremely rewarding experience. You get to meet many residents and chat with them about what is happening locally, as well as encouraging them to join the Association. It is also an opportunity to put something back into the community.

To make joining the SRA easier, details of SRA’s bank account are set out below. For simplicity, if you set up an annual standing order, you don’t need to arrange a fresh payment each year – it will be paid automatically.

Robert French Membership Secretary.

Bank Details for SRA subscription

payment by standing order and bank transfer

**Payee: Shortlands Residents Association
Santander Bank (Bootle)**

Sort code: 09-01-55

Account: 82504600

GUIDED WALK OF SOUTH HILL WOOD – 4th MAY

South Hill Wood is the biggest woodland in our immediate area, but many people, even if they walk through it regularly, have little idea of its history, both natural and man-made. So, in partnership with the Friends of South Hill Wood and Kingswood Glen, we are running a guided walk through this beautiful wood to explain its history, flora and fauna.

This year we are holding the walk to coincide with some of the best of the spring woodland flowers. We will start at 3pm on Saturday, 4th May, from the South Hill Wood Bowling Club at 2, Tootswood Road. If you would like to join us, please contact Mike Ricketts on 0208 4600395 or email info@shortlandsra.org.uk.

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