

BVRG UPDATE - JUNE 2005

Dear Neighbours, Hope you're enjoying the sunnier weather and here's our latest newsletter. It's a bit bigger than usual to cover a longer period since the last issue. Do get in touch with us via email or phone if you need further information.

POLICE PATROLLING THE VILLAGE We are really pleased to report that there have been several recent sightings of Police and Community Police Support Officers walking around the village in the evenings to see the anti social behaviour at first-hand. This is a direct result of objections from BVRG and our members so all our efforts seem to be making a difference.

BVRG ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING The AGM will be held on **Tuesday 19th July at The Old Bakehouse, Bennett Park at 8pm**. An agenda for this will be sent out to members shortly and it will include a summary of the group's activities and election of BVRG Steering Group members for the next twelve months. Please do get in touch with us if you would like to see a copy of the company accounts before this date. We are hoping to get a licence for the evening to sell some wine after the meeting to make it a bit more sociable.

CLOSURE OF THE VILLAGE FOR TRAFFIC WORKS We understand that the traffic control works in the village will commence on Monday 11th July until early September. During this period, there will be road closures on a staggered basis - London Borough of Lewisham will be delivering a detailed leaflet to residents within the next two weeks about this. Many of the local traders feel that this will be damaging to their businesses with much of the village closed to traffic. Should you wish to comment on these highway works, please contact Pam Bacchus, the Project Engineer at the council on 0208 314 2215 or email Pam.bacchus@lewisham.gov.uk

SATURATION ZONE – YOU CAN HELP PREVENT ANTI SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR IN YOUR AREA Many BVRG members and others have expressed their concern at the increasing level of noise, intimidation and anti-social behaviour in the Village, especially late in the evening. BVRG is working with Lewisham Council to establish a Saturation Zone in Blackheath Village. Under new licensing laws which come into force later this year, councils must grant applications for later licences to licensed premises unless objectors can prove that they should not. In practice, this is often extremely difficult to do. A saturation zone around Blackheath Village would mean that the Council could refuse any such application, unless the licensee could prove that it should not. This would mean a quieter and more pleasant Blackheath for local residents. The Council is looking for "evidence" to support the introduction of a Saturation Zone. They have not been able to provide a definition, but the best assumption is that reference to specific incidents would be the most persuasive. Evidence of incidents can be written accounts, photographs or video tapes – you should make a note of anything that concerns you regarding licensed premises but examples that which are of interest to the council, police and BVRG include:

- Anti-social behaviour (urinating / vomiting in public).
- Drinkers from pubs spilling out onto unlicensed surrounding areas.
- Excessive noise, both from the premises and people leaving the pubs.
- Intimidating or threatening behaviour.

Please do note down the date, time and location of the incident. If it relates to a specific premises, feel free to note this too.

If you or your neighbours and friends have witnessed any incidents, please write this down and send to BVRG via either email or letter. You may find it easier to keep a weekly diary and email it to us each week. We shall collect these and forward them to Lewisham Council. If you prefer to write directly, the contact is tony.mottram@lewisham.gov.uk or Tony Mottram, Town Hall, Catford, SE6 4RU. A copy to BVRG would be appreciated. In addition, please contact or lobby our local councillors by post at the same address as above, or by email:

cllr_gavin.moore@lewisham.gov.uk cllr_andrew.brown@lewisham.gov.uk
cllr_katy.donnelly@lewisham.gov.uk

The councillors hold a surgery at the Village Library on the first Saturday of the month. Notwithstanding the reference to specific incidents, it can do no harm to inform both council and councillors about general concerns.

If you are concerned about the increase in the problems in the village arising from late night drinking, this is your opportunity to do something about it. In order to be included in the Saturation Zone process, evidence should be submitted as soon as possible.

CURRENT LICENCE AND PLANNING APPLICATIONS Here's a summary of current applications and who to write to should you wish to object or comment:

The Princess of Wales – This premises has applied to extend its hours under the new licensing regime to 12.00am (midnight) Thurs/Fri/Sat and 11.30pm Sun/Mon/Tues/Wed. Representations against the application have to fall within the 4 licensing objectives, which are: 1. Prevention of Crime and Disorder 2. Public Safety 3. Public Nuisance 4. Protection of Children from Harm.

This extension sets a precedent for Blackheath with other pubs/restaurants likely to follow. This will have a major impact on quality of life in Blackheath. It is important that you register any objections you might have by the deadline of 4 July 2005. Objections should be sent to: Licensing Services, The London Borough of Lewisham, 2nd Floor, Laurence House, 1 Catford Road, Catford, London SE6 4RU
Email: licensing@lewisham.gov.uk

The Dacre Arms – This premises has already applied for a 3am closing time on Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays. According to the information we've received from the London Borough of Lewisham, they have now amended this application to a 1am closing time on these nights of the week. This has been based on the number of objections already received from local residents. Comments and objections can still be made about this premises through our local councillors, Gavin Moore, Andrew Brown and Katy Donnelly (their email addresses are in the above paragraph). **The decision on granting this application is likely to be made very soon, so please act quickly if it is something you are concerned about.**

Loco – This restaurant applied for planning permission on 3rd May to construct a terrace extension at first floor level to the front of 1, Lawn Terrace in connection with the existing restaurant, together with the erection of a frameless glass front entrance lobby. Should you wish to comment or make an objection, please contact The Planning Team, Laurence House, 5th Floor, 1, Catford Road, London SE6 4RU or email them on planning@lewisham.gov.uk

The Railway (Mitchell & Butler Retail) – This premises applied for planning permission back in January to construct a roof terrace on the flat roofed area at first floor level to the rear of 16 Blackheath Village. We've been informed by the Planning Team at Lewisham Council that this application was withdrawn and a new one was submitted on 10th May. The consultation period for this has not started yet but there should be a notice about this appearing on their window in the next couple of weeks. When this is put up, please direct any comments or objections to The Planning Team, Laurence House, 5th Floor, 1, Catford Road, London SE6 4RU or email them on planning@lewisham.gov.uk

UPDATE ON TRANQUIL VALE MAST We are really pleased to report that **this application was rejected.** There were many objections received so they seem to have really made a difference which is excellent news for local neighbours.

BLACKHEATH RAIL SERVICES *Meridian News* has recently reported the following:

"Proposed changes to Bexley's rail service announced by the Strategic Rail Authority will see the ending of the direct London Victoria to Dartford service via Bexleyheath and a reduction in the core frequency of London-bound trains from six to four per hour. **Concerned commuters can register their feelings by writing to Karl McCartney, Strategic Rail Authority, 55 Victoria Street, London, SW1 0EU."**

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED FOR BVRG WEB SITE AND RAIL LIAISON As you know, BVRG is run by neighbours on a completely voluntary basis. We would really like to set up a BVRG web site so if any of our members have experience of web design and maintenance, we'd be really interested in talking to you. We're also keen to talk to any of our members who would be willing to liaise with the Strategic Rail Authority regarding Blackheath Rail Services so do get in touch with us if you are interested in doing this.

BVRG PARTY Our first birthday party back in March was a great success and a really enjoyable evening. A lot of fun was had by all who attended and we raised £185 for Breakthrough Breast Cancer and a slightly smaller amount for BVRG to cover administration costs. Many people that evening commented that it really helped to build our village community and it was a great way to meet neighbours and make some new local friends. Thank you to all those people who came and supported the group so generously.

We are planning our next party on Saturday 29th October and will give you details about this nearer the time!

Blackheath Village Residents' Group Limited

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