

The Triangle Community

Making a difference to the area in which we live

Issue 2
Winter 2006

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Hello everyone! Welcome to the Winter Issue of the Triangle Community Group Newsletter. The Triangle Community Group represents residents and businesses in the area bounded by Lewes Road, Upper Lewes Road and Union Road.

In case you haven't heard of the Triangle Group before, here is a brief history of how the group formed. Towards the end of 2005, a small group of local residents began to meet in each other's houses and talk about how we might improve our area. We all love living in this part of Brighton, where there is such a diverse and interesting population of all ages and nationalities. But, at that time, there were problems with litter and graffiti, and we all felt our streets were looking as if they needed some attention. Our local councillor, Keith Taylor, held a public meeting in October 2005, and this meeting generated a lot of interest in forming a constituted community group. With help and advice from the Trust for Developing Communities, a group of residents worked hard to formally constitute the Triangle Community Group, and a Committee of around 15-20 members was voted in at an AGM held in June 2006.

Since then, the Committee has been meeting regularly to build contacts with the Council, the police and other agencies that can support us in improving our area and generating a stronger sense of community. We are responding to planning proposals, which could impact on the local environment, and looking at issues of rubbish collection and recycling. This is just the start, and we all feel we can achieve a lot for this area of Lewes Road.

But we need all of you to take an interest in helping to make these improvements, and to propose ideas for exciting ways in which things could develop. We need representatives for all the streets, residents who can talk to their neighbours and find out what everyone wants. Please come forward with ideas and suggestions, and join us in working for an even better Triangle area.

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Knees-up! →

Esso Update

Fed up of walking past the derelict old Esso site? (on the corner of Lewes Road and Edinburgh Road) Any ideas on how it could be used?

There are currently no plans for the site's immediate future. So far, local people's suggestions have included a farmer's market and a gardening nursery. Do let us know what *you* think.

We're organising an American Supper at the Salvation Army Hall on the 14 December at 7pm. What is an American Supper you might ask? Well, it is a seasonal gathering at which everyone who can, brings along some food and drink (non-alcoholic) to share. Tea, coffee and biscuits will be provided, but to add to the flavour of the evening (!), we would welcome other seasonal contributions. We are also looking for local musicians who can accompany our nibbling and munching, so if you are in a band or can play festive music of any kind, please get in touch! This is an opportunity for all members of the Triangle Community to get together, and we hope as many of you as possible will come along. If you're an older member of the community and would like someone to walk you from your home to the event. please let us know.

Police

Sergeant Cath O'Connor is head of the Neighbourhood Policing Team for our area. Feel free to contact her with any concerns you may have at catherine.o'connor@sussex.pnn.police.uk The Police Community Support Officers are here for our benefit, and the more input we give them, the more they can help us!

If you would like to speak to Cath, she will be attending our '**American Supper**' (see above), along with other Community Support Officers in her team.

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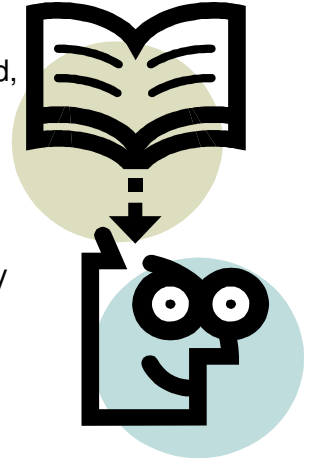
Making our voice heard

People form Community Associations because they feel that their opinions are often ignored, and there will be more chance that the Council will listen to their views if formally expressed through a Community Group or Association.

It is important that the Triangle Community Group finds out when there are planning or traffic management issues which could affect everyone, so that members of the community and the Triangle Committee can be involved in the public consultation process.

Please let Valerie Dowley, Maureen Winder or Amelia Mills know if you hear or read about any planning, parking or development issues that could affect our area.

Here are examples of two major issues currently in progress:



Parking



The Council recently proposed that the existing eight parking zones in central Brighton be replaced by two zones. Voucher parking would be replaced by pay and display schemes. This proposal turned out to be more controversial than had been expected, and the plans were rejected at a meeting of the Council's Environment Committee. Several councillors pointed out that residents in the two zones could find themselves unable to park, because so many other people would be driving into the centre of the city. The boundary of these two zones would have been close to the Triangle area, and could have impacted on parking availability in our streets.

It is very important that there is full and open public consultation before the introduction of any changes to existing parking schemes, and that residents are fully aware of all the options which could be put in place, and what impact these might have on regular car users and those without cars.

London Road/Lewes Road Study (LR2)

At the Triangle Community Group AGM in June, Andy Glover, Senior Economic Development Officer at Brighton and Hove Council, talked about the LR2 study. This looks at enhancing the neighbourhoods and shopping areas north of the city centre – London Road and Lewes Road. A consultancy firm 'Urban Initiatives'

(http://www.urbaninitiatives.co.uk/urban_initiatives.html) has been given the task of consulting with local residents in the London Road Central area, and held a consultation session at the Brighthelm Centre on 12 September, followed by a walk around New England Road, London Road, the Open Market and Ditchling Road down to St Peter's Church.

Although a number of people had been invited to take part in this consultation, very few participated, and certainly nobody from the Triangle had been invited, although it was clear that the Salvation Army was involved. News of this consultation session and walk appeared in an article in the Evening Argus, and as a result, a couple of members of the Triangle Committee went along and joined in the walk.

We were a bit concerned that there was no proper introduction or explanation of the process; those that went along were simply asked to point out problems or ideas for improvements to the London Road central area by writing them on post-it notes which were stuck on notice boards. The walk, however, was very useful, as it provided an opportunity to really look at the streets and think about what was wrong and what could be better. However, our input was rushed and not very well prepared, since we simply didn't have enough time to think through our responses.

We suggest that the consultation process needs to be more widely advertised, held at a time when more people can attend (not when most people are at work), and provide everyone who attends with a clearly written explanation of the objectives of the process and a map of the streets involved.

Survey Update

Thanks to everyone who filled out the Triangle Community questionnaire, and congratulations to all those who won prizes in the draw. Data from the survey is now with the Trust for Developing Communities, who will produce a full report on the area early next year.

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What a load of old Rubbish!

Next issue
**Advertisers and
sponsors (and
anyone else wishing
to contribute to the
Triangle newsletter)
please note – the
deadline for
contributions to our
next issue is
16th February**

The Triangle Group has formed a sub-committee to promote a cleaner and graffiti free environment. The problem with waste and rubbish is a contentious issue in this area with residents; the survey we conducted in the summer shows that this is a priority that needs dealing with.

The pavements are often strewn with rubbish which can be a health hazard. The problems arise from:

- Residents putting rubbish out on the wrong days with plastic bin bags being attacked by seagulls, foxes and rodents.
- Fly-tipping - old furniture, mattresses, computer monitors etc dumped on the streets.
- Misuse of recycling boxes where they are again not put out on the correct day - or not brought in after collection!
- Recycling boxes filled with contents that are not recyclable.

The sub-committee has had two meetings where the relevant council officers have attended. There have been some improvements and the council has been receptive to our concerns.

We feel the main way forward is through education, offering residents and businesses clear and helpful information to encourage the correct disposal of refuse.

We have organised walks in the area with the council enforcement officer as well as the graffiti officer. We are keen that the council take action in the various 'hot spots' where rubbish and graffiti are a problem.

Encouragingly, we have had success with removal of graffiti, especially in the Park Crescent Road area. However, problems arise when graffiti is on private residences and the owners' agreement is needed before removal can occur.

We agree that graffiti which is creative and artistic can enhance the area. Tagging is not. Brighton has good examples of creative graffiti especially near the station. Some buildings in our area could benefit from such a makeover – are there any mural-painters out there?

If you see large items such as fridges and mattresses which have been dumped and wish to report them call Cityclean on 01273 292929.

You can also contact council officers Sarah Leach (graffiti) and Nathan Deakin (enforcement) on the above number.



Upcoming events

14 December 2006 An 'American Supper'

All residents are invited to join in a seasonal event at the Salvation Army Hall. Bring along food to share – fruit, salads, bread, mince pies, biscuits, etc, and non-alcoholic drinks of any kind.

Tea and coffee will be provided, and we hope that some local musicians can provide some relaxing background music.

Salvation Army Hall, 7-9pm

8th January History Group,

Every month members of the community meet to discuss local history at the Bugle Inn. You are welcome to join us! (next meeting on 8 Jan)

Bugle Inn, St Martin's Street, 7-8pm

Legislation which could affect us all

Two new pieces of legislation could have an impact on all of us. The first is the **Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act**, which covers a wide range of issues that affect residents, such as illegal parking, abandoned vehicles, litter and graffiti, control of dogs, noise nuisance, light pollution, and abandoned shopping trolleys. Fixed penalties can be issued to those who create a nuisance in their neighbourhood, so it is a powerful piece of legislation for the Council in improving our local area.

The second piece of legislation affects **homes of multiple occupancy**. A HMO is a building that is lived in by more than one household and more than two people. This can include bedsits, shared houses, non self-contained flats and some self contained flats. The aim of this is to bring HMOs up to a reasonable standard and to ensure that the people who live in them are not at risk of fire, or infection through vermin or poor drainage, and it also aims to ensure that buildings are not overcrowded. All HMOs must now be registered and licensed.

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Plans for The Level could transform it into a focal point for open-air arts and performances. The Level is earmarked for regeneration and proposals include a stage for concerts and plays.

Nigel Borrowman, of voluntary group Friends of the Level, said they wanted to use grant money to turn the park into a hub of artistic activity.

He said he had approached Brighton Institute of Modern Music about the idea and they were keen on having a stage where new talent could be showcased.

The Friends are also hoping the park could be used for events such as an art market and a farmers' market, where Sussex produce can be sold.

Mr Borrowman said: "It would be great if we could have an arts market a bit like the one they have in Kensington. "Artists sit around the perimeter of the park and have their work on show - it's lovely to walk around and look at on a sunny day."

The Friends want to launch a competition among architecture students to design a stage for The Level.

They hope it would be a "bandstand of the 21st Century", and are keeping an open mind over what its design might look like.

Mr Borrowman said: "We don't want it to be like a traditional Victorian bandstand; more a futuristic approach. Most importantly, we are looking for something of real architectural significance."

Pavilions are designed each year for the Serpentine Gallery in London and Mr Borrowman said it would be great if Brighton could have something similar.

He added: "We believe such a proposal would attract many more visitors to the park and would therefore benefit local bars and businesses. "We don't think the park is being used to its full potential at the moment and it would be great to see it used as a social focus point."

A budget of £150,000 is available for regeneration of The Level through Brighton and Hove City Council.

It was paid into a community fund by developers as a condition of them building houses in the area.

Anyone interested in designing a stage should contact the Friends on 01273 700556 or email

friendsofthelevel@gmail.com

What's in a name?

The Bugle Inn was established in 1850, and so called because it was a popular haunt for soldiers from Preston Barracks (near the site of B & Q) in Lewes Road. If the soldiers ventured any further away from the barracks they would be unable to hear the sound of the evening re-call bugle!

Do you know how your street got its name?

If you think you know why the Scottish Streets - Caledonian Road, Edinburgh Road, Aberdeen Road and Inverness Road - are so named, let us know.

Are there any older residents in the Triangle who have a story to tell about growing up here?

Drop your stories in to us either by email togetherletsmakethingshappen@googlemail.com. Or deliver them to David Maslen Estate Agents 39 Lewes Road – mark it Triangle History Group and we will collect them. We will return all photos but how about coming along to our next meeting and showing us?

The History Group meet at the Bugle Inn, St. Martin's Street once a month. See "upcoming events" for more details

Contact Us

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Newsletter, website & Graffiti
Rubbish & Recycling

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