



DPNF WINTER NEWSLETTER – JAN/FEB 2024

MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

Welcome to the Winter DPNF Newsletter, which is now planned to be circulated Quarterly. We have begun this year with a renewed purpose, after some disruption towards the end of 2023. You might have noticed we have not issued a newsletter for a little while. Sadly, due to sudden illness, we lost an important member of our Committee, Kathleen Molnar, who – amongst other responsibilities – took on the role of Communications Lead. Please see the memorial below.

We have continued to be active across our community according to our mandate, and supporting those who live and work in our Dartmouth Park catchment and beyond. [www.dpnf.org.uk] Please see below for some of our key activities these last few months.

As always we welcome people to get involved in a number of ways: to join us, to volunteer on one of our many neighbourhood projects, or give a small donation to enable us to continue our daily functions. More information is below. Or, please contact: info@dpnf.org.uk

We wish you a Happy, Healthy and Prosperous 2024, and look forward to seeing, talking to and working with you in our neighbourhood!

Ilona Hay
Chair, Dartmouth Park Neighbourhood Forum



KATHLEEN MOLNAR – MEMORIAL

Kathleen Molnar's name will be familiar to many across Dartmouth Park and Highgate. She lived in Holly Village for over 35 years. She was very active in the community, offering her time and communication skills, honed while working in public relations for firms such as BT. Her sudden death from cancer in late November 2023 came as a great shock and sadness to many who knew her and has left a big hole- as she took on many volunteer roles, being generous with her time and energy.

She believed in the value of sharing information, so that as many residents, businesses and local groups as possible could benefit. Whether Kathleen was liaising with the Swains Lane shop hub, being part of the core group of the Highgate Festival, supporting the Holly Lodge Estate Community Centre, participating as secretary of the Highgate Safer Neighbourhood Panel, and of course being the Communications Lead for our DPNF, she gave her all.

Amongst other duties she stepped in to help with for the DPNF, Kathleen pulled together material from committee members for the important monthly newsletter -reminding us as needed. Our readership increased under her care. Many enjoyed the warm way in which she opened and signed off her emails- when communicating with community members. She liaised with other local groups linking up for mutual support and benefit. She was assiduous in thanking other volunteers and was focussed on ensuring good publicity in the local press. Additionally, she volunteered to refresh our DPNF website - reaching out to her network for help, a task that will have to continue on without her.

Her organisational and communication skills enabled our Christmas lights to be installed in Swains Lane. Funding was supported by councillors via CIL to purchase and install lighting, and Kathleen's warm approach ensured that the lampposts were suitably adapted by Camden Council.

It was touching and fitting that the light installation for this recent Christmas season was supported by donations from local shops and residents, to honour Kathleen and her valued contribution. She will be much missed.



PLANNING GROUP

The planning subgroup has been looking out for proposed developments in the area. In terms of those spotted from Camden's planning portal, there has been very little apart from a submission by Wildwood Nature School to be permitted to use St Mary Brookfield Church Hall as its base, with community use guaranteed for evening and weekend use, by arrangement. The DPNF raised questions about this, but the proposal received planning permission and the school is now functioning.

New Homes for Small Sites

Camden council are building additional housing on two estates, which the DPNF is following closely:

- Churchill Road/Spencer Rise estate. Scheme comprises six supported-living homes.
- Highgate Road estate (Haddo House). Scheme comprises 5 – 10 council homes.

DPNF is engaging with Camden's consultation programme to try to ensure that scheme design accords with neighbourhood plan policies. Camden hopes that planning applications will be submitted in late Summer 2024

St Mary's Church Hall, York Rise - Wildwood Nature School

DPNF objected to this development principally because it meant the loss of a meeting hall, available for hire for a wide range of functions, listed as a community facility in the neighbourhood plan.

Permission was given for conversion to a school. However, a section 106 agreement includes a Community Use Plan that enables the hall to remain open for community use in the evenings, weekends and school holidays.

Sainsbury's Local, Spectrum House, Gordon House Road

DPNF became aware of Sainsbury's intention to convert offices in Gordon House Road to a convenience store when they applied for a liquor license. They did not require planning permission owing to changes in planning regulations.

DPNF object to this development (as do many local residents) on the grounds that a 24 hour store in this location will bring greatly increased noise and disturbance to a residential street and deliveries will cause a dangerous level of congestion on a road used by emergency vehicles. The scheme could not be stopped by objecting to a liquor license.



DPNF GREENING INITIATIVES 2024

Growing Green

Ilona and Valerie met with Jeska and Claudia of Growing Green Climate Action on January 23rd. We had a very constructive discussion which will lead to us being much more 'joined up' with other neighbourhood groups in our area working on greening and climate change.

Amongst many things, we talked about the projects Growing Green are working on in local schools. The DPNF intends to be involved in local projects like the Hedgehog Corridor, the Green Nature Corridor, and increasing biodiversity on the Whittington Estate. It is looking forward to working with local groups like Growing Green and Heath Hands.

Waterlow Park – Trust Advisory Group Member

We are getting involved through greening, on the borders of Dartmouth Park. On January 24th Valerie attended her first meeting as an official representative for DPNF on Trust Advisory Group [TAG] for the Waterlow Park Trust.

Valerie reported to them on the considerable help that is being given to people with mental health issues in the kitchen garden, where she has a plot. Three of these plots are now gardened by these groups, these comprise the Maya Centre for battered women, the Harrington Scheme, and the mental health unit in the Whittington Hospital. Through these TAG meetings Valerie will also be able to further link the DPNF. with other local greening groups some of whom reported back to the meeting. In all, a very constructive start for our future local greening initiatives has been made this New Year.

Trees and Tree Pits

Eileen has continued to systematically review and comment on tree works in our area, in response to Planning alerts. We are grateful for her diligence and expertise.

Tree pits are being planted by our volunteers, to increase greening. So far areas covered include near the bus stops at the end of St Alban's Road and also Swains Lane.

If you see a green ribbon around the round the trunks of street trees, you should be able to see some flowers below them coming up in the Spring! The ribbons are important to be left in place and not removed- they are physical markers to stop Camden's contractors from clearing tree pits and spraying with weed killer. We like to think they are a marker for us to see tete-a-tetes or other planted flowers!

Mortimer Terrace Nature Reserve (MTNR)

January 2024 and things are looking up!

The first nature surveys able to take place in almost 4 years are underway. Camden Council have undertaken tree surveys. Also, MTNR trustees have co-ordinated the first plant and animal surveys. The first of these, a bird survey, took place January 21st and found the UK's tiniest birds the Goldcrest, Coal Tits, Long-tailed Tits to name but a few. In addition there was the larger Wood Pigeon. Surveys will continue this year and help gain vital data for management plans for the future of the site.

The Asset of Community Value (ACV) is due for renewal this year and will again be submitted by the DPNF. Trustees of MTNR are working with Camden and the DPNF to make sure the required documents and evidence is collected to secure ACV status for another five years.



PROJECTS

Doynton Triangle

Doynton Triangle: Following the completion of the first phase of the works to Doynton Triangle, DPNF have engaged with a representative of the local residents to help enable the next stage of the works to take place in collaboration with Councillor Wright. A zoom meeting has been arranged between the local residents' rep, DPNF and councillor Wright in early February to discuss the way forward. Watch this space!

York Rise Estate Finials

The DPNF is investigating a new project to make some improvements to the unique historic washing lines of local housing.

While looking at trees for her planning application work, Eileen noticed the washing line posts in the York Rise Estate had missing ceramic finials. (What are finials?- they are the decorative ornaments at the top or edge of an object). After doing some research, she learned that the finials on the St Pancras Housing Association Estates had been stolen; many were in America, and that two from the Somers Town Estate had recently been bought back to the Somers Town People's Museum.

In a letter to the CNJ, she suggested local community involvement and local charities could be involved. Lorna Jane Russell, our Green Councillor, has expressed support on application for CIL money. There are plans to engage with estate residents, contact local makers, and apply for funding.

To understand what might be possible, Eileen and Peter have so far met with Wood that Works. They plan to contact local potteries next.

ABOUT DARTMOUTH PARK NEIGHBOURHOOD FORUM (DPNF)

DPNF is an independent not-for-profit non-political body, run by and on behalf of the local community. It is open to everyone who lives or works in Dartmouth Park, together with elected councillors who represent the ward. There is no membership fee.

DPNF's committee is comprised of locally-based skilled and committed volunteers. Committee Member Biographies can be found on www.dpnf.org.uk

We are keen to involve more people of all social, work, and ethnic backgrounds and from different age groups.

Are there any young people out there with an interest in architecture, design, the environment and urban regeneration?

Participation is possible by joining the DPNF Committee or one of our working groups (energy efficiency and resilience, greening & open spaces, planning, safe streets), or collaborating with us on a one-off ad hoc basis. Please contact info@dpnf.org.uk

Please visit the website www.dpnf.org.uk and subscribe to receive newsletters and updates.