

Views from the Hill

NEWSLETTER OF THE TEWKESBURY LODGE ESTATE RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION

January 2014



Motoring Mayhem

It needs to stop – now.

In our last edition, we highlighted the issues raised by residents regarding the speed and volume of traffic in Canonbie Road and adjacent streets, particularly during the school run period. Highly concerned residents, particularly those with children at Fairlawn Primary School, have now formed a campaign group to address growing safety concerns relating to high volumes of traffic and irresponsible driving. *Mothers Against Motoring Mayhem* (MAMM) aims to engage the local authority, police, and local schools in a constructive dialogue about these safety issues and work with them to develop solutions. If these problems are not properly addressed, it can only be a matter of time before a tragic accident happens

Fairlawn School is on Honor Oak Road, and St Francesca De Cabrini School is situated at the junction of Honor Oak Road and Forest Hill Road. On both roads the pavements near the schools are very narrow, and wheelie bins left on the pavement on refuse collection day further compound the problem. Parents walking their children to either of the two schools are often forced to step off the pavement, or even walk along the road. Honor Oak is a very busy road, and the speed limit of 30mph is frequently exceeded by many drivers. There are no adequate, properly maintained, or visible road signs warning motorists of the danger of a school and, given that in dry conditions the typical stopping distance for a car travelling at 30mph is 23 metres (about the same length as 6 cars), the potential hazard for young children is clear.

The traffic flow and dynamics of the increasingly high volume of traffic on Honor Oak Road is causing an increasing number of drivers to use Canonbie Road to avoid the traffic build-up. It is now a really busy 'rat run' with a constant stream of vans, trucks and cars using it, especially between 7.30am and 9.30 am when the children are on their way to school. Crossing the road is difficult as visibility is poor due to the gradient of the hill – Canonbie Road is one of the steepest roads in South East London and several dangerous incidents have

occurred that increase the hazards to children as well as adults. Recent incidents include vehicles entering from Honor Oak Road stopping suddenly or sliding backwards owing to the steepness of the slope, and drivers losing control of their vehicle and crashing into several parked cars and the front garden walls of three residents. Coaches and lorries have even more problems negotiating the hill.



Additionally, the steep slope requires vehicles to engage a low gear which results in increased emissions of hazardous clouds of exhaust fumes. Children are more susceptible to the effects of air pollution - because of their height they have greater exposure to pollutants emitted close to the ground. Emissions are made worse when vehicles accelerate and decelerate between speed bumps. Many frustrated drivers see the wide road as an opportunity to overtake vehicles observing the existing 30mph speed limit in what has become increasingly a rush hour frenzy.

There has also been an alarming rise in the use of Netherby Road as a rat run by parents driving their children to St Francesca De Cabrini School. When dropping off their children, many parents stop close to the junction of Forest Hill Road and Honor Oak Road or drive-up onto the pavements used by pedestrians, many of whom are parents walking their children to school. Other examples of irresponsible driving include parents performing U-turns to go back down Forest Hill Road after dropping off their children.

Clearly these hazards need to be urgently addressed. See page 5 for more details.

*Printed on
recycled paper*



*Walking to school
along Honor Oak
Road - single file in
places...*

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Chair's report



The past few months have seen quite a few changes to the Association – and as it happens more changes are on the way. It was with regret that we learned that Elaine Pringle was retiring from her role as Police Liaison representative for the Association. She has been acting in that capacity for more than 14 years, regularly attending meetings with our Safer Neighbourhood team to raise issues of concern for members and to receive regular updates regarding crime and policing problems in Forest Hill and the wider local area. We would like to thank her for all she has done to help keep the crime rate on the Estate so low. Rowena Lowe has also given up her role as Secretary, but we are pleased to say she will now be taking an active part in monitoring and responding to planning applications on the Estate.

I'm pleased to announce that we have seen a few volunteers step forward and offer some of their free time. Lots of people have mentioned to me that one reason they are a bit hesitant to volunteer is that they're not really sure exactly what roles (and the associated responsibilities) are available, meaning they cannot estimate how much free time is required and if it's feasible for them. We're currently in the process of devising a much more organised structure to the way the

Association operates, and more clearly defining roles and responsibilities. Information about this will be published on our website in due course.

As you will have read, a separate group has been formed with a view to campaigning for road safety measures around the Fairlawn / Cabrini Schools and the surrounding roads (including Honor Oak Road / Canonbie Road). The Association is taking an interest in the views of this group and the outcomes, and has for some time considered that Canonbie Road in particular requires a number of improvements, to the extent that the entire road and its pavements and associated street furniture requires a complete overhaul. Not only will this provide an opportunity to improve road safety, but will also enhance the streetscape.

After positive feedback from members, the Association supported the application made by the Horniman Museum to extend the weekly Farmers' Market on the Bandstand Terrace beyond December 2013. I am pleased to say that planning permission has now been granted, and the market will now be a permanent weekly event.

Dave Lowe



Sally Tuhami

AGM

The Association's Annual General Meeting was held at the Horniman Primary School in September, and marked the end of Rowena Lowe's role as Secretary to the Association, as she stepped down from the role. The Association has been extremely fortunate in inspiring new resident, Sally Tuhami, to take on the role of Secretary.

After the AGM business was concluded, Steve Grindlay, a renowned local historian, gave a fascinating talk on the history of Forest Hill and the original Tewkesbury Lodge Estate on which the majority of our homes were built. Our thanks to Steve, and to Julia Clark for allowing us to use the School.

Summer Picnic

Pin the tail on the monarch... surely that is treason, is it not...

Every year the Summer Picnic in the Triangle is different, but having enjoyed the Queen's Diamond Jubilee theme last year, we thought the Queen's Coronation might lend itself equally well as a theme for the children's games this year. Having gathered together shiny toffee wrappers (the toffees were gallantly consumed solely for this occasion), kitchen foil, and other shiny gold and silver things a couple of evenings in advance, we made a sceptre, six crowns, and six diamond 'eggs' to balance on spoons, as well as putting together six sets of smart gear for visiting the Palace. On the day, the children were more than happy to jump over ropes wearing crowns and to act as ladies or pages in waiting, bringing much needed water to a very authentic looking freshly crowned Queen sitting on her throne holding her sceptre. There



was also a 'Pin the crown, or handbag, (or moustache!) on the Queen' game, with the option of pinning crowns on the corgis for the smaller children. Finally, having already run the 'Dress for the Palace' race, the children were ready, sparkling and smart, for a royal procession which was led through the Triangle and cheered on by the adults.

Of course, our Summer Picnics are not usually this regal, and I think that next year's theme is likely to turn to football, with the World Cup being played out in July 2014 in Brazil. Any suggestions of football related activities for the children, and possibly even the adults, would be gratefully received!

Suzanne Jessel

Editor's note

The Summer Picnic is organised every year by the Association. It is an ideal opportunity for members to meet up with friends and neigh-

bours, and get to know new residents. The fenced Triangle at the junction of Horniman Drive and Liphook Crescent (usually a restricted public space) is an ideal place for the children to play while the adults enjoy a glass or two of Pimms and a leisurely lunch, choosing from the mouth-watering array of savoury and sweet dishes people have brought along to share. This year, with temperatures soaring, the Triangle proved to be the perfect place to be, the leafy canopy from the mature trees providing a veritable oasis of cool!

Fireworks event

It was not a promising start. The day of the Association's firework party dawned anything but bright and clear - it was pouring with rain, and looked set to stay that way. But the fireworks, food and wine were bought, so there really was no alternative but to go ahead. There is a large covered area under the School for spectators, but this is small consolation if you happen to be one of the team of pyrotechnics! A start on setting up the display was made, but, as the rain continued to fall steadily, it was decided to reconvene later that day in the hope that the weather would improve.

We need not have feared. Eventually the rain eased off and, although somewhat later than planned, Association members were able to enjoy the mulled wine and traditional bonfire night fare: sausages, chicken in barbecue sauce, chilli con carne, homemade pizzas, spare-ribs, and mini-hamburgers as well as baked potatoes and salad. Vegetarians were not forgotten with an even more varied range of really delicious dishes this year. Then the pyrotechnic team took over and worked their magic. Despite the appalling weather conditions earlier in the day,



their efforts resulted in a magnificent display of fireworks that was really appreciated by the 200 or so members who attended.

This annual event could not happen without the team responsible for both the lighting and fireworks display. However, there are many other people who make the event the success it has become, including the army of cooks willing to help provide that important hot food and warm mulled wine. Most importantly, we owe a huge vote of thanks to Julia Clark, Head Teacher of Horniman Primary School, for once again allowing us to hold the event in the school grounds.

Valerie Ward

Horniman Farmers' market

A Saturday morning market on the Horniman bandstand area started in September. Feedback from members was very positive, with them welcoming having a locally sourced market selling fresh produce from independent growers/traders in the immediate vicinity. The stallholders are both friendly and knowledgeable about the food they are selling and offer a wide range and variety of high quality, reasonably priced seasonal vegetables, bread, and other produce that is generally not available in Forest Hill town centre. The specialist stalls selling chutneys and preserves, baked goods, and hot food were also appreciated.

This weekly market is a much needed and welcome addition to the area, and we are

pleased to report that planning permission has been granted for it to become a year round facility for our residents.

Editor's note

A Horniman Drive resident living near the entrance to the Gardens contacted the Association regarding the noise and disruption caused by vehicles delivering goods to the market. Some drivers were arriving very early, and leaving their engines running and radios playing until the gates were opened. The Association contacted senior staff at the Museum regarding the problem. As a result, Market traders will be able to use the London Road entrance early on Saturday morning when not many people will be in the Gardens, and

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*A successful test of the Big Bang theory...
Photo by Neil Abrahams*

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there will not be rush hour traffic to contend with on the South Circular. Drivers will still leave via the Horniman Drive exit but it is not anticipated that this will be a problem.



A bunch of market stall owners loitering within tent....

Spot the real policeman amongst the actors.....

Police, camera, action!

The Estate witnessed all three at the end of October. Unsuspecting residents and visitors may have felt they were entering a major crime zone as they turned into Westwood Park and were confronted by police cars, ambulances, and crowds of police officers. Closer inspection also revealed camera and lighting crews – and Danny Boyle! He was directing a feature-length pilot episode for a new Channel 4 police drama series *Babylon*, starring James Nesbitt. The following evening saw men leaping over garden hedges wearing the full assault gear of the Metropolitan Police Armed Response Unit, armed with a very convincing array of weaponry. The pilot episode was recently broadcast, with the remaining six episodes scheduled to be shown in the Spring. Danny

All suppliers (for the Market, Museum & Gardens and Cafe) are supposed to adhere to the Horniman's protocol for deliveries which state that deliveries must be made between 7.30-10am on weekdays and 8.30-10.30am at weekends. Additionally, drivers must do all they reasonably can to prevent disturbing residents by turning off their engine and radio when leaving the vehicle to speak to Security via the intercom, and speaking at normal volume levels and not shouting when using the intercom. Do let us know of any instances where these instructions are not being followed, so we can take the matter up with Museum staff.

Boyle, by way of thanks, came back to speak to residents about his experiences of the London Olympics Opening Ceremony.

Valerie Ward



Planning update

51- 53 Canonbie Road

The fourth planning application for two modern design houses was received in September 2013, and was objected to by the Association on the grounds of the bulk, massing, and scale of the proposed houses in relation to the streetscape. At the informal meeting held by the Council to discuss this application (between applicant and objectors), a request was made for fully scaled and detailed drawings to provide further information on the uses of each room, including the garden room. Lewisham's Planning Department are yet to decide on this application, four months on.

46 Ringmore Rise

An application to demolish an existing bungalow in Ringmore Rise and construct 2 three-storey, 4 bedroom semi-detached houses on the site was opposed by the Association and neighbours of adjacent properties. The Council agreed that the proposed development constituted overdevelopment of the site, and would cause a significant and unacceptable impact on

neighbouring properties. Planning permission was therefore refused on the grounds of its inappropriate scale and mass.

Horniman Museum & Gardens

Permission was granted for an external seating area for the cafe, together with the provision of a small permanent timber-clad kiosk to help reduce queues within the café at times of high demand. An outside seating area is needed to cope with the number of visitors using the café, especially in the summer months. The area is currently laid to lawn which is not suitable for high traffic areas, and is even more impractical when the ground is wet, particularly for wheelchair users. At present, the lawn is in very poor condition and replacement with a more suitable hard surface was regarded as an improvement. The proposed scheme uses brick pathways within bound gravel together with raised planters and additional planting along the perimeters to give year round interest.

Rowena Lowe

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Motoring Mayhem-the issues

Traffic speed

These residential roads are totally unsuitable for high volumes of traffic, and the current speed limit of 30mph is too high on roads used by parents to take their children to school. Speed bumps are completely ineffective - many drivers exceed the speed limit and very little seems to be done to enforce current speed limits.

According to Councillor Peake, the recent petition for a 20mph zone highlighted in our last newsletter has yielded no response from the Council. The issue was raised by Rowena Lowe and Maynard Firth at a police liaison meeting last November, and a promise was made to send police officers to observe the situation, an offer that was most gratefully received. Subsequently, PC Michael Hill of the Forest Hill Ward Local Police Team initiated the running of a Road Safety Awareness Partnership with Fairlawn school this term. The initiative is designed to emphasise the importance of road safety to both children and their parents and focus on offending motorists failing to comply with road safety directly outside the school – which is very welcome support from our local police team.

Southwark Council has been particularly proactive in deploying both traffic wardens and camera cars around the St Francesca de Cabrini School. However, this has only driven the problem into Netherby and Canonbie Roads, worsening the situation for both residents and children alike. Lewisham Council did not appear to have the awareness, resources or capacity to deal with the problem. What they intimated was that no action would be taken unless there was a serious accident or fatality.

Poor road signage

Road signs warning motorists travelling at 30mph of the danger of a school are completely inadequate in both Honor Oak Road and Forest Hill Road. Despite repeated and numerous requests for clarification as to who is responsible for improving road signage, this remains unclear.

Inherent road hazards

There are two highly dangerous 'blind spots' in Honor Oak Road. One is the junction with Canonbie Road which is particularly hazardous when used by drivers redirected by their satellite navigation system, and/or who are unfamiliar with the steeply sloping road. The other is at the junction with Tyson Road when drivers are trying to cross into Canonbie Road. As well as having to contend with fast moving oncoming

traffic from the west, they are unable to see vehicles coming along Honor Oak Road from the east. Drivers regularly stall their vehicles while trying to accomplish this manoeuvre, which is often done with ill judged haste and speed. There are absolutely no warnings, traffic calming measures, or any other indication of the potential hazards ahead. Meanwhile, very many young children and their parents/carers have to negotiate these dangerous junctions during the busy rush-hour periods. For over three years, every politician, council department, and mayoral official approached has merely shrugged their shoulders when asked who is responsible for addressing this situation.



Safety railings

The number and strength of safety railings at the junction of Honor Oak Road with Forest Hill Road are totally inadequate given the speed and tonnage of traffic negotiating this tricky junction on the top of the hill. We have highlighted this concern to all responsible parties, who have unanimously cited the difficulties of negotiating a resolution across the borders of Lewisham and Southwark whose boundaries split the road. Not one of the officials contacted have made any suggestion as to who we might approach to help resolve this issue.

All previous attempts to address these issues by numerous members of the Association and other local residents have proved utterly fruitless.

Mothers Against Motoring Mayhem (MAMM) has been formed out of a total disenchantment with the people they believed were in a position to help. The aim of MAMM is to develop a concerted campaign to engage all the relevant, responsible parties, in a bid to prevent an inevitable tragedy.

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Just squeezing through

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We urgently need your support, ideas, opinions and action to address what is a major threat to the young children on the Estate. If you can help in any way, do contact dagmar@mamm.org.uk or facebook.com/mothersagainstmotoring mayhem, or via the TLERA website. *Maynard Firth*

Editor's note

Towards the end of last year, a member living in Canonbie Road was taken by ambulance to A & E following a road traffic accident while trying to cross Forest Hill Road to get to Honor Oak Park Station. There is no proper pedestrian crossing, only a traffic island designed to help pedestrians cross safely. Traffic was at a stand-

still, and the car nearest to where she was crossing had left a big gap for pedestrians. However, the cars obscured a cyclist who was travelling at high speed down the hill. She was hit with such force that she was flung into the air, landed on her back, and cracked her head on the road. Fortunately, there were no broken bones and, after being monitored for 48 hours, no serious neurological damage was found. However, she suffered severe concussion, was badly bruised, and pain restricted her mobility for some time.

She said "I am amazed I have no broken bones and overall feel very lucky to be alive."

Needless to say, had it been a small child rather than an adult, the outcome could have been far more serious...

A flying visit?



In April, three flying ducks landed in Ringmore Rise next to our house. This took the residents and people passing by completely by surprise.

Mobile phones were out to catch this unusual, beautiful scene. Some residents started feeding them. Given the threat from foxes, nobody knew what to do if they decided to stay overnight, so phone calls were made to different places for advice. Before sunset they decided to fly off, but came back after 5 minutes. This time more food was available for them. Then again, as the sun set, they flew off and we breathed a sigh of relief.

Interestingly, for some days they kept coming back to the same place, at the same time, although we had no idea whether it was people's hospitality or some other natural reason which brought them back here.

Hossein Kavani

News from the Horniman Museum and Gardens

The Horniman opened the gates to its new Animal Walk in August, inviting visitors to see and learn about its new furry and feathered residents. Now home to alpacas, goats, sheep, rabbits, guinea pigs, golden pheasants, chickens and a rooster, the Animal Walk lets visitors walk through the centre of the new enclosure for a close up view of the animals. Open seven days a week, and free to enter, there's also information and interpretation boards looking at the connection between domesticated animals and their wild relations, and a new visitor hand washing station.

The Horniman first developed an animal enclosure 40 years ago. Then, as now, it became a popular attraction for visitors to the Gardens. Further bringing to life founder Frederick Horniman's vision of an outside space reflecting

the Museum's collections, the opening of the new Animal Walk saw the final stage of the Horniman's Gardens redevelopment.

The Gardens, affected by the storms last Autumn, provided challenges for our new Head of Horticulture, Wes Shaw, and the Gardens team. Wes joined us in October following 12 years at the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew. Readers can find out more about Wes, the post-storm clear up, and his plans for the Gardens in the accompanying feature.

Since September the Horniman has been running a weekly Farmers' Market on Saturday mornings, selling locally sourced produce including vegetables, meat, bread, hot food and more. It proved very popular with the local community and has now received planning permission to make it a permanent fixture.

The ducks wondered what made the humans return to the same spot for several days running...

Planning permission on a proposal to landscape and improve the area outside the café was also successful, and will make it more suitable for outdoor seating all year round – more space to enjoy a coffee and the scenery, without getting such muddy feet! Many thanks to the Association for their support.

On Friday 13 September (unlucky for some but not for us!) the Horniman won the Telegraph Family Friendly Museum Award – alongside joint winner Brixham Heritage Museum, Devon – beating four other finalists to the coveted top spot. Held in association with *Kids in Museums*, the win was announced at a ceremony at the Telegraph's offices in London following short-

listing by a panel of expert judges from a 20-strong longlist, and a secret visit from undercover family judges over the summer holidays.

From the end of November visitors can become a Member of the Horniman and not only receive some fantastic benefits but also directly support the care of our collections and Gardens. We have three types of membership, ideal for exploring the museum solo, with a friend, or with your family.

We hope to see you at the Horniman soon.
Alison McKay & Stephanie Hay

Introducing Wes Shaw, the Horniman's new Head of Horticulture

What brought you to the Horniman?

After more than a decade spent working largely under glass in the Palm House at Kew, I felt it was time to get back outdoors and take on some new challenges.

The Horniman's fantastic Gardens were a big part of the appeal, of course, along with its quirkiness, the friendliness of a smaller organisation, and the interesting events and activities on offer for the public. And there's a fantastic team of Gardens staff with great experience and working to a very high standard. That's a very exciting starting point for my role.

What have been the challenges so far?

Learning the ins and outs of a new organisation is a big part of any new job. Plus after focusing on tropical species at Kew, I'm doing a bit of 'revision' now that I'm working with a broader range of plants.

The team had to deal with the challenges caused by storms last year. The Gardens were closed for a few days while we cleared up. We lost a couple of mature trees and there has been a lot of limb damage to others, mainly in lower-

lying ground, which you might not expect. There was clearing up to do in the Nature Trail too. But overall it could have been much worse and, sad as it is to lose mature trees, it does give us opportunities for replacement planting.

What plans do you have for the Gardens?

It's early days but I would like to build on the excellent work done during the Gardens redevelopment, to create even more displays and interesting plantings that link into the Horniman's collections and will also be of interest to the amateur gardener. More immediately we're preparing to put in some new 'Tea Clipper' roses, which were named by specialist grower David Austin to mark the 2006 centenary of Frederick Horniman's death.

What's your favourite plant?

I particularly like the Horniman's collection of mature trees, and I'm looking forward to working with them. But I don't have any favourite plants, I love them all.

What's your garden at home like?

I live in a flat, so I don't have a garden. I have two houseplants which are thriving!

Farewell from Elaine

After more than 14 years representing the Association at the Forest Hill Safer Neighbourhood Panel, I have retired from the post of Police Liaison. We are fortunate that Forest Hill has a relatively low crime rate. This is due in part to vigilance by ourselves to ensuring that it remains so. Apart from the more obvious things like burglaries, car thefts etc., there are many other areas where involvement with the Police has helped to keep up standards in the area. Some of the things I have been involved with are listed below.

For the Association and its members.

- Attended Police Panel meetings and passed on the information obtained to the TLERA Committee.
- Advised the Police of issues brought to me by members of the Association.
- Arranged for wrecked cars to be removed from the rear of blocks of flats on the Estate.
- Assisted members whose cars have been stolen or damaged outside their properties.
- Taken up individual cases with the Police when members do not want

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Wesley Shaw

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their identities to be known.

- Checked if unknown cars have been abandoned by joy riders and are listed as stolen by the Police.

For the Forest Hill area

- Campaigned to stop cars going the wrong way down Manor Mount.
- Had a new directional road sign erected outside the car park at the rear of Sainsbury's.
- Restored the Help Point outside WH Smith to operational status.
- Had the damaged wire fence repaired at the border of the Horniman Triangle Play Park (at a busy pedestrian crossing opposite the Horniman Museum entrance).
- Stopped men trying to smash car windscreens at the junction of Honor Oak Road and the South Circular.
- Helped local traders with shoplifting problems.

- Helped to prevent a repeat of the Jerkfest in Horniman Gardens when over 20,000 people descended on the Gardens causing gridlock to neighbouring roads and mess in residents' front gardens.

So much is done to keep the area we live in safe for you all – perhaps without you realising it.

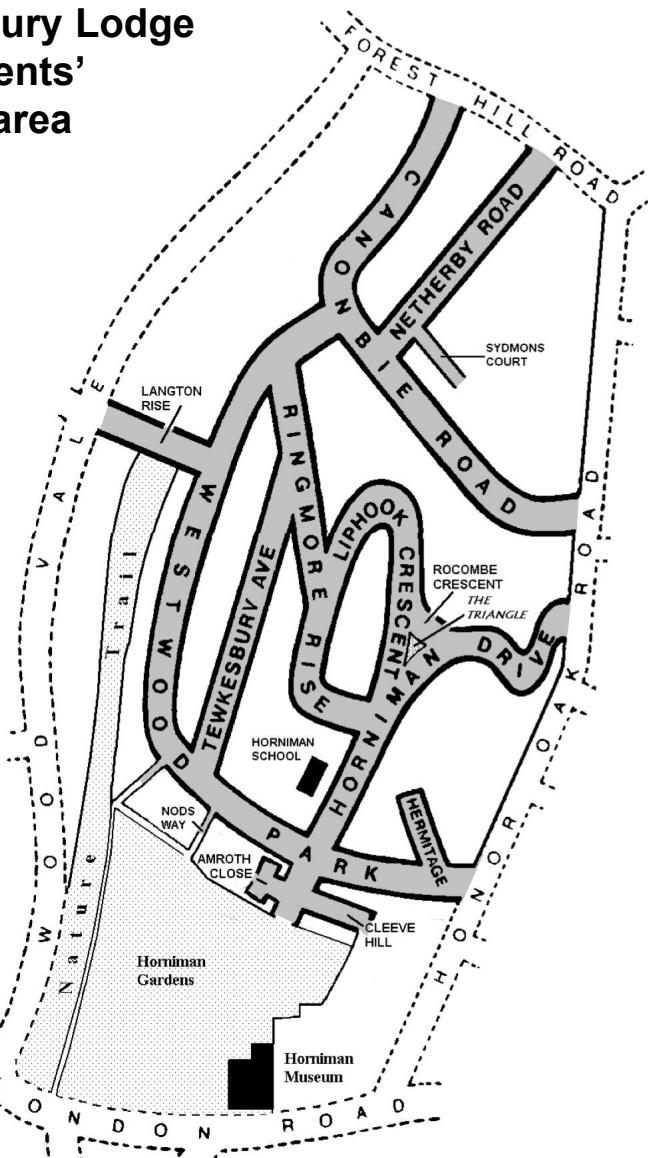
Elaine Pringle

Editors note

We are very pleased that Maynard Firth has offered to take over the role as police liaison representative for the Association.



The Tewkesbury Lodge Estate Residents' Association area



This newsletter was compiled and edited by Valerie Ward, and proof read by Carole Abrahams. Design and layout by Michael Schlingmann. Contributions from members are very welcome and can be e-mailed to us at secretary@tewkesburylodge.org.uk