

# BROMLEY LABOUR GROUP NEWS

NEWSLETTER OF THE LABOUR MEMBERS OF BROMLEY COUNCIL

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## **ANOTHER BORIS JOHNSON LET DOWN OVER CRYSTAL PALACE PARK**

The Mayor of London has failed to take up the option which his predecessor, Ken Livingstone negotiated with Bromley Council to take over the running of Crystal Palace Park with effect from April 1<sup>st</sup>. **This decision has cost Bromley Council taxpayers the best part of a million pound a year.** Following on from his decision last November to cancel the Crystal Palace Tramlink extension and the failure of Penge Parks to receive any money from the Mayoral Help A London Park bid in January, it is clear that he has no intention of investing in the north of the borough. What a way to reward all those Tories in Bromley who voted him in last May!! Bromley Tories are looking at working with other boroughs but it is clear that they have not got the finances to invest in the park. The decision to grant planning consent for flats on the Crystal Palace Park Rd side of the development has been called in by Hazel Blears despite the fact that overall, there will be an increase in green space in the park as a result of the master plan. An inquiry is due to take place in July. The Crystal Palace National Sports Centre itself has just reopened after being closed for nearly two years following the discovery of asbestos. The London Development Agency (LDA) has spent £17 Million in dealing with the problem and upgrading facilities. The diving pool has been refurbished and new facilities include a longer swimming pool to meet international standards. The floor of the arena and its seating has been replaced and changing rooms and exercise studios have been upgraded. The LDA took over the site from Sports England in March 2006. It costs £2 Million a year to run, has facilities for more than 100 sports which are managed by not-for-profit organisation Greenwich Leisure Limited (GLL). A further phase of works costing more than £5 Million is planned to take place over the next five years.

## **BORIS JOHNSON – ONE YEAR ON**

Boris Johnson's first year as Mayor has been marked by incoherence, a lack of vision and transport cuts. On the environment, he cares more about the rights of private vehicle drivers than the air Londoners have to breathe. He has rolled back congestion and emission charging, re-phased traffic lights at the expense of pedestrians and slashed funding for cycle lanes. A promise of £750,000 for four rape crisis centres has not been delivered. He has talked a good game on crime but much of the infrastructure on any reduction was in place when Ken was mayor. His pledge to deliver 50,000 more affordable homes by 2011 is now pretty worthless. Just an example of what the Tories could be like if they get their hands on the levers of power nationally.

## **BROMLEY AREA ACTION PLAN AGREED**

The April Full Council meeting saw the Bromley Area Action Plan agreed unanimously. The scheme which has been consulted on since 2005 and is likely to see final government approval next year will see redevelopment in the town centre area of around 1800 new units of accommodation. 250 will be at Bromley North, 20 on the South Street Car Park site, 20 at the Civic Centre, 1180 west of the High Street, 200 at the Westmoreland Rd Car Park, and 40 at the former DHSS building at the corner of Masons Hill and Westmoreland Rd. Subject to planning consent, there will be a multiplex cinema, residential units and a hotel on the Westmoreland Rd Car Park site. The former DHSS building in Westmoreland Rd will see a mixed use development including replacement office space. There will be a further 20 units at the Sainsburys site in West Street. The Council are also seeking a high quality department store to keep up with Bluewater and Croydon.

A Retail capacity study is currently being carried out. Additional leisure and community facilities are also included in the scheme. Further details of the proposals are available on the council website – [www.Bromley.gov.uk](http://www.Bromley.gov.uk)

## **BOROUGH COMMANDER DELIVERS UPBEAT MESSAGE ON CRIME**

Chief Superintendent Charles Griggs delivered an upbeat message on crime to both the Bromley Neighbourhood Watch AGM and the Labour group AGM at the end of April. Whilst not being complacent, he highlighted the fact that there has been significant reductions in transport crime, particularly on the buses with routes 61 and the 208 previously giving cause for concern. Eight new police officers and seventeen new PCSOs on the Safer Transport Team will add to the crime fighting force thanks to funding from Transport for London. The roll out of Safer Neighbourhood team bases continues with a new one at Elmers End to cover both Clock House and Kelsey and Eden Park wards to be opened shortly. Bromley currently has 13 bases. That will make Bromley the only Borough in London to have all its estate fit for purpose for the next 10 years. Crime levels are heading in the right direction with the exception of car crime and burglary which account for almost 30% of crime in the borough. A pilot scheme is currently taking place with officers wearing body-worn video cameras which can be switched on when incidents take place. Knife crime has captured huge media attention. The use of stop and search in Bromley has increased by over 65% but only 33 knives have been recovered. Less than three in every thousand searches results in the recovery of a knife and yet the media would have you believe that every young person carries one. The Police are also working far more closely with the Crown Prosecution Service, the CPS who ultimately make the decision as to whether charges will be brought for crimes. For non emergency calls, you can contact the police on 0300 123 1212. For more details on what the police are up to in the borough go to [www.met.police.uk/bromley](http://www.met.police.uk/bromley)

## **ORPINGTON HIGH STREET**

The new Tesco store at the end of the High Street is set to open on 19<sup>th</sup> May. It remains to be seen what effect this will have on the rest of the High Street as a whole. Full details of what is happening in our High Streets can be found on the [www.towntalk.co.uk](http://www.towntalk.co.uk) website. Orpington and Bromley Colleges are also set to merge in the not too distant future.

## **CONTACTING BROMLEY LABOUR GROUP**

We are always happy to take up issues that you raise with us and to keep the Tories in Bromley in check. One of the best ways of doing that is on e mail or through the council website – [www.Bromley.gov.uk](http://www.Bromley.gov.uk) You can contact councillors by using the same format e.g., [Peter.Fookes@Bromley.gov.uk](mailto:Peter.Fookes@Bromley.gov.uk) This is the same for members and officers of the authority as well. We also have our own website which can be accessed at [www.pengeandcatorcouncillors.co.uk](http://www.pengeandcatorcouncillors.co.uk) and is regularly updated almost daily by John Getgood. You can also write to us c/o Bromley Civic Centre, Stockwell Close, Bromley BR1 3UH or leave a message on our answer phone 0208-460-0626. Don't forget that the only scheduled election this year is on Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> June from 7-00am to 10-00pm when the European Elections take place. If you might be away or have difficulty in voting in person, you can vote by post so don't lose your vote. More details are available on the Bromley Council website.