

# **BROMLEY LABOUR GROUP NEWS**

## **NEWSLETTER OF THE LABOUR MEMBERS OF BROMLEY COUNCIL**

**CRAY VALLEY WEST WARD  
COLIN WILLETTS**

**PENGE & CATOR WARD  
PETER FOOKES, JOHN GETGOOD & KAREN ROBERTS**

**JULY/AUGUST 2009**

### **PLACE SURVEY SHOWS BROMLEY IS GOOD BUT ROOM FOR IMPROVEMENT**

The results of a survey into the borough by Mori have recently been released. This annual survey which is undertaken by all councils monitors perceptions on key local issues. Over 4000 questionnaires were sent out with a response rate of 37%. Residents satisfaction with their local area has increased to 84% from 80% in 2007 and 76% in 2006. Out of all thirty three London boroughs, Bromley now ranks 7<sup>th</sup> compared with 9<sup>th</sup> In 2006. In terms of what needs most improvement in the local area, activities for teenagers is the top mention (as it was in 2007) at 48%, followed by the level of traffic congestion (42%), road and pavement repairs (40%) and the level of crime (35%). As a priority, the level of crime has consistently fallen over the last three years, but given that it remains the top factor in making somewhere a good place to live, it can still be considered the key issue. Following crime, the next highest priority is clean streets (25%), giving a similar picture to the one in both 2006 and 2007. A third of residents are dissatisfied with the condition of roads and pavements in the borough. Bromley residents are concerned about teenagers hanging around the streets. What a pity that Bromley Tories show little signs of wanting to invest in youth facilities, unless somebody else is paying. Only 30% of Bromley residents feel that in their local area, parents take enough responsibility for the behaviour of their offspring. 87% of residents feel that Bromley is a safe place to live. This is up from 80% in 2007. Satisfaction with sports and leisure facilities appears to have fallen back sharply this year from 61% to 51%. In Bromley, 36% of residents agree that the Council provides value for money and 26% do not. Overall satisfaction with the Council now stands at 53%. It was 62% in 2007 and 59% in 2006. On the subject of keeping residents informed, this has fallen from 56% in 2007 to 40% now. Bromley being the only London borough that does not have a council magazine. Only 27% of residents agreed that they can influence decisions affecting their local area, compared with 34% across Outer London. This places Bromley 31<sup>st</sup> out of the 33 London boroughs.

### **LABOUR CALLS FOR E PETITIONING ON BROMLEY WEBSITE**

At the late June Council meeting, Labour councillors called for the council to provide an e petition facility on the council website. Many other councils have adopted this policy a la the 10 Downing Street website. Increasing numbers of Bromley residents now have internet access and our proposal will be considered shortly by a Council sub committee looking at ways of improving the constitution.

### **THYME OUT SCHEME LAUNCHED**

A project that aims to improve the life chances of up to 40 participants with learning disabilities was launched by TV actor, James Nesbitt at the end of June. The three year project, run by Bromley Field Studies Centre will provide free horticultural training to gain skills and qualifications, as well as basic work skills, literacy and numeracy. Participants will be tending to the gardens at the Civic Centre. The project was made possible thanks to over £300,000 worth of Big Lottery funding as well as match funding from Bromley Council, and other agencies, supported by a network of local organisations, Bromley Mencap, Job Match, the friends of Bromley Town Parks and Gardens,

Sparks, Skills for Care and the Bromley and Bexley Advocacy Project. We see no reason why this project if successful should not be made permanent.

## **CAPITAL INVESTMENT IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS**

Thanks to further investment in education from the Labour government, two schools in the borough are set to benefit. £2.5 Million will go to Ravenswood School in Bromley to fund deficiencies in the school's post-16 accommodation. The development will provide 14 new classrooms, an integrated learning centre for 6<sup>th</sup> form students, new drama and music facilities and an all-weather pitch. Hayes School is set to benefit with capital expenditure up to £500,000 for the development of a new Speech and Language Development (SpaLD). This will accommodate up to 20 places at the unit by 2012. Currently 35 pupils with high levels of language need are being housed across the borough.

## **BROMLEY TORIES SELL OFF PENGE COMMUNITY ASSET FOR HOUSING**

Bromley Tories recently agreed to sell of the former 101A Parish Lane Youth and Community Centre for housing despite our calls for some form of community use to be retained on the site, possibly with the help of lottery funding. Despite having over £45 Million in the coffers, they refused to invest in the site which has suffered from asbestos. It has lain empty for the best part of three years. The political will from them in supporting the local community has not been there. Along with the recent fiasco over the promised new Penge Library which they have also failed to deliver, it is clear that they have no regard for residents in the north of the borough.

## **ORPINGTON TOWN CENTRE**

The recent Mori survey showed that Orpington continues to be poorly regarded as a safe and pleasant town to visit (whereas there have been improvements for both Bromley and Beckenham). Vacancy rates are at nearly 12%. A total improvement package of £2.2 Million is reliant on £1.2 Million coming from Transport for London (TFL). Lets hope that the Mayor can deliver on this and not create problems as he did over the Crystal Palace Tram Link extension which he cancelled last November. Bromley Tories have not got a plan B if he does not deliver. Proposals for Orpington include high quality coloured block paving, new contemporary street furniture, tree planting, wider pavements and improved parking facilities. An exhibition is being held from 21<sup>st</sup> to 25<sup>th</sup> July from 10 to 4 at the Walnuts Shopping Centre. It is still probably too early to judge the impact on the town from the opening of Tescos which took place in the middle of May.

## **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 eg, [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 (020) 8460 0626.