

# **BETTER ARCHWAY FORUM NEWSLETTER No 5 - December 2007**

There are two issues in this newsletter we would really like to hear from you on – licensing and shop shutters - and others we'd love some help with.

If you have received this by email you can simply click the reply button to get in touch, or email [contact@betterarchway.info](mailto:contact@betterarchway.info).

If you are receiving this by post and do not use email, you can write to BAF, Hargrave Park School, 51 Bredgar Road N19 5BS.

## **1. ABOUT THE BETTER ARCHWAY FORUM**

The Better Archway Forum (BAF) was set up in January/February 2005 in response to the Council's plans to promote redevelopment at Archway. We have been working since then with the Council and others to improve the Archway area.

To find out more about us see [www.betterarchway.info](http://www.betterarchway.info), or come along to one of our public events.

## **2. LAP DANCING CLUB**

The application by Timzia Ltd to operate a pole dancing and table side dancing club at the Archway Tavern has been refused. Technical reasons for refusal included the fact that there were no details of the management team who would be running the business.

However, the overwhelming opposition from the local community – reported the largest ever received by Islington – made it crystal clear to all involved what was expected by local residents.

As well as the issue of local feeling, the decision is important because of the message it sends out about what kind of area Archway is – down at heel where anything goes, or a town centre which is about to see real improvement.

The applicants may appeal the decision, in which case the matter will go to the magistrates, however, it is possible that in the face of the publicity the issue is arousing, including from the Mail on Sunday, he will simply let it drop.

### **3. LICENSING**

This appears to be a growing issue in Archway. A couple of members are undertaking a survey of licences in the area and have reached a total of 34, with recent additions including the conversion of the bagel shop to an outlet which is principally an off licence.

There are growing reports of anti-social behaviour connected to alcohol, ranging from dropping of takeaway food on the pavement to vomiting, throwing of beer cans, urinating and worse. And the verbal abuse has on occasion escalated to serious violence.

While this escalation of alcohol related issues is a UK-wide phenomenon, Islington suffers particularly from them, with alcohol-related hospital admissions 77% higher than the national average, and those related to alcohol and violent crime 92% higher, those statistics relating largely to the Whittington Hospital.

The issue is largely to do with off licences. Where behaviour is connected to a specific pub or bar, there are measures to deal with this. However, where alcohol is consumed away from the point of supply, this is harder to tie down.

Changes due to the Islington licensing policy should offer some help with this if it is wanted. Firstly when deciding on an application, it will be possible for saturation to be taken into account. Secondly the licensing committee can 'have regard' to neighbouring uses, eg residential property.

BAF is wondering whether members would like the council and local police teams to become more proactive on this, taking a more stringent view over licences which may be issued, and perhaps considering the introduction of a ban on street drinking. This would not apply to those drinking outside establishments serving alcohol, but would mean that those buying alcohol from off licences would not be allowed to drink on the street.

We would really like to know what local people think about this so could you let us have any comments – [contact@betterarchway.info](mailto:contact@betterarchway.info) – or see at the top.

### **4. SHOP SHUTTERS**

Islington planning policy is clear that external and solid shutters are not permitted and head of planning enforcement is clear that where they have been installed in the past four years, he can require their removal. Internal, open mesh shuttering is recommended instead – and indeed is found in places like Upper Street.

Anna Woodward the new town centre manager has details of various insurers who do not require external shuttering, and we understand that the police do not require or even recommend them.

As we understand it, part of the problem is that a number of shops are on just five-year leases so run by people who do not know the area, see that some other shops have shutters and install their own without checking whether permission is required. Anna is due to send out a letter informing them of the position.

Shops can cope without solid shuttering even in areas where there is significant night-time activity and drunkenness such as Upper Street, and where solid shutters are installed they contribute significantly to the perception by outsiders that the area is worthless.

The reasons are that solid shutters hide sight of the daytime activity and, unlike glass, do not reflect light so the extra perception of movement is lost. And where installed they send a message that an area is dangerous at night-time.

We would like to know if BAF members are in favour of removal of shutters. Can you drop us a note about this to [contact@betterarchway.info](mailto:contact@betterarchway.info), or see above.

## **5. FOR SALE SIGNS**

Would anyone like to take on the task of monitoring the For Sale signs which sprout on Junction and Holloway Roads?

The rules are that a sign must not be displayed if a property is not in fact available to buy or let, and once let or sold, that fact can be advertised for just 14 days.

Most of the signs on Junction Road contravene these rules and they make the place look less desirable, giving the impression that lots of people are selling up and moving out.

Unfortunately, although this is a planning contravention, it is a time-consuming business to deal with so planning enforcement prefers to focus on naming and shaming to encourage the estate agents responsible to take them down.

Again if you think you could help with this, could you drop us a note at [contact@betterarchway.info](mailto:contact@betterarchway.info), or contact above.

## **6. GREENING THE GREY**

This is a new strategy from Islington, resulting in schemes such as the green wall being installed on St Gabriel's church.

They are keen to find more suitable site, either council owned or where the owners are happy to work with the council on this kind of improvement.

It would be great to have a dedicated team on this because this kind of greening can make an enormous difference and it could go hand in hand with encouraging a little more tree planting.

If you would like to volunteer (and it would really make a significant difference to the area) please get in touch at [contact@betterarchway.info](mailto:contact@betterarchway.info) or see above for contact details.

## **7. EYES FOR ISLINGTON**

We've mentioned this before but now that we have the new town centre manager, Anna Woodward, there's an increased chance of getting the officers to deal with issues in the area.

The idea is that you report problems and issues, ranging from the need for an extra street lamp to fly tipping or litter, and get swift action to put it right. The more people there are signed up to this in the area, the better the chances of getting matters dealt with.

Contact is Fatma Mehmet, Eyes for Islington Scheme Co-ordinator, on 020 7527 2334 – more details at <http://www.islington.gov.uk/Environment/EyesForIslington/default.asp>.

## **8. ART INSTALLATIONS**

Community artist Theresa Caruana is going to do light projections on to St John's Church (corner of Holloway Road and St John's Grove) 4-8pm on Saturday 8th December, prompting us to think about the hidden wildlife in Archway.

All BAF members are invited to go along and take a look at her images with a view to inputting to larger projects in the new year.

The Saturday project is being done in conjunction with Rowan Arts who have organised a couple of concerts at the church – one for families at 3pm and another for adults at 8pm. For details see [www.rowanarts.org](http://www.rowanarts.org).

## **9. ARTS CENTRE**

BAF is looking for people who have professional experience of arts projects to act in an advisory role for the development of an arts centre in the area. If you think you could help, drop us a line at [contact@betterarchway.info](mailto:contact@betterarchway.info) or via contact details at the top.

## **10. BAF WALKS**

BAF is organising a series of walks on alternate first Saturdays and Sundays, meeting 10.30am at Cafe Metro next to Archway Station. Wear comfy shoes.

Next walks scheduled for:

Saturday 1<sup>st</sup> December  
Sunday 6th January  
Saturday 2nd February  
Sunday 2nd March  
and so on.

As well as considering features along the way the walks are a chance to discuss ideas for Archway - experts of all kinds welcome.

## 11. HELP US STAY IN TOUCH

Have we got your details right? If we've got any part of your name or address wrong, please let us know. You can leave a message on 020 7272 3989 or email BAF at [contact@betterarchway.info](mailto:contact@betterarchway.info).

### **Note**

It has come to our attention that over the last few months a number of letters in the local press criticising BAF have been written under pseudonyms. The local newspapers have been informed of this.

From the beginning BAF has always sought the widest membership – an open forum for people to debate decisions and reach consensus about ways forward. While genuine criticism is welcomed as informing the real debate about how Archway should renew itself, undercover comment is more likely to be promoting vested interest - including even it seems the opening of a lap dancing club - under the guise of supporting the community.

We hope the author will desist as unsubstantiated attacks on local organisations are not helpful. At the same time it is important that members continue to contribute to the genuine and on-going discussion.

### **BAF CONTACTS**

**Kate Calvert (Chair)**

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**Alan Perry (Secretary)**

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**Jan Tucker (Treasurer)**

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**Or at BAF, Hargrave Park School, 51 Bredgar Road N19 5BS.**