



A Voice for Our Community

August 2019

Welcome to the Summer Newsletter from Westwood Heath Residents Association (WHRA). Much has been going on in the background, following up on all the changes that are planned for our area. This Newsletter aims to bring out some of the more interesting local activities.

Planning

Many of you will know that there are lots of changes being discussed for the area within and around Westwood Heath, and it is these changes that prompted a Residents Association to be set up in order to represent the views of this thriving community. Alongside other local Residents Associations it gives us the chance to influence the planning activities of Coventry, Warwick and Solihull councils, and to help mould the plans to better suit our local environment.

To summarise, the plans that are currently being considered or are expected to be raised in the near future, are those listed below:

- HS2
- Housing on Westwood Heath Road, approximately 425 homes – planning approved
- Housing behind Cromwell Lane, around 250 homes planned – planning not submitted
- Housing at the top of Red Lane, around 90 homes currently being built
- Car Parking at Tile Hill railway station
- Link Road between the A46 and Balsall Common

The WHRA has set up a website to collate and share the information on these projects, and whilst it is still in its infancy, useful information can be found there already. For instance, there are links to both the Warwick Council planning department and Coventry Council planning department pages on the Westwood Heath Road housing development.

The WHRA website can be found by using the following link:

<https://www.westwoodheath.org.uk/>

There are also Facebook, Twitter and Instagram accounts for those who use such social media, and links are accessible from the website. If you are already following us on Facebook, why not come along to our meetings and have your say? Or consider joining us?

The meetings planned for the coming year are:

Tuesday 24th September 2019, Tuesday 10th December 2019,

Tuesday 10th March 2020 and Tuesday 16th June 2020.

All meetings are held at The Westwood Club on Westwood Heath Road, starting at 7:30pm. The meetings are for interested residents to discuss the issues facing Westwood Heath and to join in discussion on possible activities including social events. It also gives the local

community an opportunity to come together and to make new acquaintances in a social atmosphere.

We aim to have attendance from representatives of the developers and council officers, as well as police and/or fire service representatives. Watch the website and Facebook for more information nearer the time.

The general email address for your questions or suggestions is:

westwoodheathra@gmail.com

Membership

There is a membership fee of £5 per household per year, in order to cover administration costs such as printing and website fees. However if you do not feel that you want to join, you would still be very welcome at any of the WHRA meetings to listen to the discussions, but will not be eligible to vote.

We currently have 97 households who registered during the last year, and memberships are now due for the coming year. Payment is available by various means, please see the website for details.

Streetwatch

Streetwatch is a local initiative backed by the police, for residents to walk the streets in a suitably highly visible way, to advertise the fact that we are keeping an eye out for dubious behaviour. It has also become a very useful method of getting to know neighbours and local residents in a friendly environment, not to mention the health benefits of a good walk! Several pets have also been located so it is certainly not all business.

Anyone can join, with a minimum of police-led training, and there is a minimal commitment of walks per month at a time to suit yourself.

If you are interested in being part of this initiative, Louise would love to hear from you via:

streetwatch@westwoodheath.org.uk



Westwood Heath History Group

The Group was founded a year ago with the aim of learning more about the long and fascinating history of the area and sharing findings with local residents and other interested parties from further afield.

Our group members are carrying out research into many topics of local interest, including the school (now the Greek Orthodox Church), Westwood Church, the Leigh family and their influence in the area and the monastic grange at Bockendon, which supplied produce to Stoneleigh Abbey from the 12th Century up to the time of the Dissolution. We also keep in touch with the activities and research of the Stoneleigh History Society - since Westwood Heath was a hamlet in Stoneleigh parish until 1928, we have much shared history.

We were pleased to be able to research the fallen soldiers of WW1, based upon the War Memorial located in Westwood Church. Some local residents kindly supplied details of their own ancestors who had served in this war and we were able to create a commemoration of these men on the history pages of the Residents' Association website. As the 80th Anniversary of the beginning of WW2 approaches – and the anniversary of the Coventry Blitz in 2020 - we hope to pay tribute to those who were involved in this conflict.

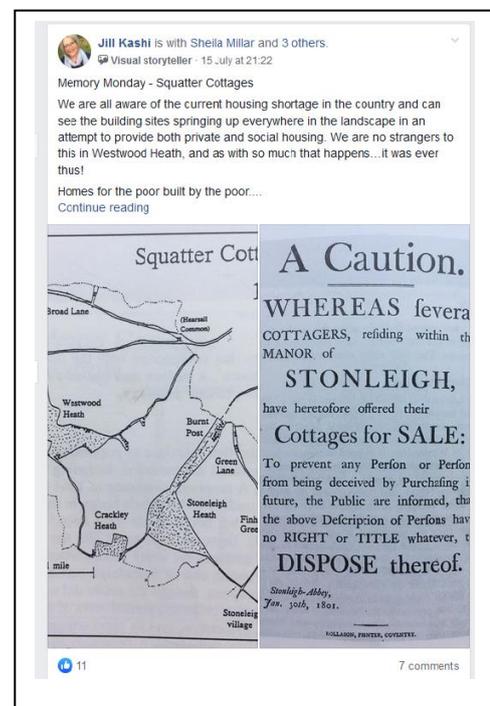
Some group members are painstakingly working through census, birth, marriage and death records as well as monumental Inscriptions, so that a database can be created specifically for this area which will be of use to family historians.

If you use Facebook, please check out our updates in the Residents' Association closed group. Here, we share historical findings most Mondays – “Memory Mondays” - as well as other updates of interest to history lovers. This feature is proving popular and always generates discussion. We have covered the

history of Gibbet Hill, Maypole dancing at the school, Fletchamstead Hall and the oldest driver in the U.K – a Westwood Heath resident – to name but a few! Occasionally, we have a “Then & Now” feature which is always fascinating as comparisons are made between old and modern photos of locations in our area. All these articles from “Memory Monday” are being adapted for the website and will soon be available to access on there.

If you wish to join us and undertake some research, you will be made most welcome. In time we hope to hold larger meetings but for now we are a small, informal group.

We are always keen to hear from anyone with a story to tell, or memories to share, of life here in years gone by – or even if they are of relatively recent years, as the area has changed rapidly, and continues to do so. If you have any old photographs you would be willing to



share, we would be delighted to hear from you. Also, if you have any questions about the history of Westwood Heath, or any comments or suggestions, please do get in touch.

Jill Kashi, Westwood Heath History Group

Email: westwoodheathhistory@gmail.com

Local Information

St John's Church, Westwood Heath Road: We meet for Sunday Celebrations at St John's, starting with coffee and refreshments from 10.15am and then start the service at 10.30am. On a Sunday you'll be joining about 150 others for lively worship (led by a band) teaching & vision and time for prayer and Holy Spirit Ministry. We welcome newcomers and visitors and are relaxed and informal in style (dress casual!). We believe in sharing life, worship and outreach together through the week in "Missional Communities."

We also have a service on the first Sunday of the month, and a community drop-in breakfast on the third Sunday of the month, in Burton Green Village Hall. Both start at 10:30.

Greek Orthodox Church, Westwood Heath Road: Regular service on a Sunday, Divine Liturgy (Eucharist) 10:30am – 12pm. Once a month the service is held in English.

Morning coffee with Fr Theo, Wednesdays 10am – 1pm. Proceeds go to Entrust charity, meeting the needs of disabled children, young people, adults and their families and carers through the provision of short break activities, support, training and advice.

The Westwood Club, Westwood Heath Lane: members club with large function room available for events. Activities include a regular quiz on Thursday nights from 9pm, bingo and other events. Details on the website: www.thewestwoodclub.co.uk.

Natural summer beauty around the area

