

AN INSPECTOR CALLS AS GIA FUNDS SHRINK

THREE LOCAL businesses, a group of residents at the corner of Northchurch & Culford Rds, and a resident in Ufton Rd objected to parts of the amenity scheme for the De Beauvoir GIA at a 4-day Public Enquiry held from 12-15 July.

Conducting the enquiry was Mr R G Holder, an independent inspector appointed by the Dept of the Environment to hear objections and decide whether the scheme is to proceed intact or whether there should be modifications in the light of the objections.

The De Beauvoir scheme has been the subject of one of the most extensive and exhaustive exercises in participation held in any GIA in Britain. Over the 5 years from 1970-75, a series of surveys, exhibitions, questionnaires and public meetings have revealed overwhelming support from the residents for the environmental improvements, and play and amenity spaces. None of those who objected was against the scheme in principle.

Hackney Council, the initiators and executors of the scheme, defended their proposals, and the De Beauvoir Assoc. spoke strongly in its favour.

STAMFORD/HERTFORD Steele's, the glass merchants, whose operations have caused concern to nearby residents for some years, wanted to do away entirely with the Hertford/Stamford closure, to allow continued free access between their various premises. This was opposed by the Council on the grounds that the amenity space at the north of Hertford Rd is the only one to serve the northern part of De Beauvoir. Rejecting Steele's claim to be a 'neighbourly' industry, the Council proposed a slight modification which would allow adequate access.

NORTHCHURCH TERRACE

Doyle's Motorcycles of Northchurch Terrace, who would have no vehicular access to their premises if the original proposals went ahead, were told of local concern that access might lead to wholesale parking and minor servicing of machines on the new, expensively laid out pedestrian area next to the church, presenting a hazard and an eyesore to the elderly tenants of the 16 old people's flats next door. The compromise proposed was that access should be provided for pushing motorcycles into the premises for repair, with all parking being restricted to De Beauvoir Rd.

NORTHCHURCH/CULFORD

Despite massive modifications already made to meet the objections of 6 residents at the Northchurch/Culford Rd junction, the group had canvassed additional support to try to reduce the area of the play space. Both Council & DBA stressed the shortage of amenity space throughout De Beauvoir and the need to look at the problems of the community as a whole.

UFTON

Mr Rayner of Ufton Rd sought to modify the closure at Ufton/Northchurch Rd because of the threat of industrial traffic in Southgate Grove restricting access to residents nearby. As an alternative, he would accept a no-waiting restriction for lorries in Southgate Grove.

The inspector ended the enquiry with a tour of the area, and is now preparing his report for Environment Minister Peter Shore. It could take anything from 4 to 18 months before the Council and the residents know the inspector's findings and the Minister's decision. No work can start in the meantime, and so we must all just continue to be patient, as the purchasing power of the GIA funds goes on shrinking. Graham Parsey



photo: JEREMY HAMAND

IF THE QUEEN had been on the top deck of a 30 bus when she travelled from Hackney to Highbury on July 6th, she would have been able to see over the rusting corrugated fencing on Ball's Pond Road into the derelict strip of land behind. And she might wonder, if she knew the history of it and the high feelings of many of the people who live on the adjoining Dovercourt Estate, why the only action that has been taken since the land was released from a road-widening scheme last December, is the erection of large, brand new advertisement hoardings at the Southgate Road junction.

The GLC, who own the strip of land, say that it is classified as a Temporary Open Space, but that nothing will be done about removing the metal sheeting or "landscaping" the plot before the end of this year at the earliest.

What the Queen didn't see: behind the new hoardings and the old tin fencing, an abandoned wasteland which Dovercourt kids make the best of.

Tenants on Dovercourt Estate have written to their landlord (Islington Council) objecting to the abandonment of the land, and to the new, larger hoardings which have gone up, and which block the view of tenants on the lower floors of Threadgold House. While pointing out that it is not their land, Islington Council have told at least one tenant that the new hoardings will be there for another two years.

It's a pity that the Queen's progress through Islington and Hackney wasn't used as an excuse at least to get rid of the corrugated, which has been there for the best part of 10 years, and provide some more play facilities for the children of Dovercourt.

Jeremy Hamand



photo: GRAHAM PARSEY

Taking a breather: some of the volunteers with the rubble they shifted from around the trees in the Ufton Rd minipark in the summer

VOLUNTEERS CLEAR PARK

A LEAFY CORNER of the new Ufton Rd minipark was preserved by bands of up to 30 volunteers clearing rubble during two Sundays in June.

The demolition contractors would have had to bulldoze the area to clear the rubble, but now, thanks to the work gangs with picks, shovels and wheelbarrows, a grove of cherry, apple and plum trees will survive.

TOWPATH OPENS

FOR THE FIRST TIME for many years, it is now possible to walk all the way along the Regent's Canal towpath as far as Victoria Park. The Hackney section of the towpath is now open, with De Beauvoir entrances in Southgate Rd and by Whitmore Bridge, which should be open at roughly the same time as parks and public gardens. The new railings and gates were put up in time for a Jubilee opening with help from the Job Creation scheme.

A small exhibition on the canal will open at the Rose Lipman Centre in early November. In the meantime, the canal's a great place for a weekend stroll - perhaps to Camden Passage to the west, or Victoria Park to the east, where a gate gives direct access to the park itself.

AREA TEAM FOR C33

CIRCLE 33 Housing Trust, the housing association which works in De Beauvoir, has decided upon a radical reorganization of its management.

One of the fastest growing trusts in the country, Circle 33 already operates in seven London boroughs. Now its housing management and building development functions are to be divided up among four area teams, each with a separate area manager.

The De Beauvoir properties, with others in neighbouring parts of Hackney, will be grouped in an area with the small number of properties in Tower Hamlets. The area will be the smallest of the four created.

The idea, according to Circle 33's director, Donald Hoodless, is to make the Trust more responsive to special local needs and conditions. The reorganization which was wholeheartedly supported by Robin Young, De Beauvoir's Trustee on the committee of management, took effect from September 1st. "The fact that a senior member of the management team has special responsibility for our area is an assurance that rapid growth will not mean remote, faceless or inaccessible managers", says Young. "It is likely that we will have some new officers working in the area instead of those we have got to know. But in the long run the change is going to open the way for more local participation and control."



photo: JEREMY HAMAND

JONATHAN Aldridge (2½) finds Dad's Coronation Coach still worth playing with in Jubilee year. His father (the family now live in Hertford Rd) won the coach at a street party contest held (because of the weather) at his school, Ecclesbourne Primary. Amazingly, the intricate Lesney toy survived intact until a few years ago, when one of the six horses lost a head and a leg at the hands of a cousin.

see JUBILEE SUPPLEMENT



photo: GRAHAM PARSEY

DID YOU MISS your chance to buy a tree in the spring? If so, don't despair: tree planting time's come round again, and so has the De Beauvoir Bargain Tree Offer. Most trees are available from Nottcutt's Nurseries at special discounts of at least 25% - with free delivery to De Beauvoir. For details contact John Aldridge on 249 3577, or De Beaver.

(Above) Joe and Vi Bray plant their flowering cherry, assisted by Brigid Philip and John Aldridge, following the Tree Offer last spring

DBA AGM NOV 26th

DBA AGM is being held on Wednesday Nov 26th at Rose Lipman Playgroup Room at 8.00 pm. It will be followed by an informal meeting with guest speaker at 8.30.

IN FUTURE DBA meetings will be held in Rose Lipman Centre committee rooms on the second Wednesday of each month at 8pm. The meetings are open, and everyone is very welcome.

GRANTS UP

IMPROVEMENT GRANTS have gone up. The levels vary according to where you live and what improvements you are making. But if you're in one of the GIA's, grant support can be as much as £3,480 per dwelling. To find out just how much you can get, it's best to phone the Council Improvements Section: 739 7600 ext 370, and tell them what improvements - or repairs, also grant-eligible in certain cases - you are planning.

APOLOGIES

The Editors apologise for the late appearance of this issue, due to an unexpected combination of personal and business pressures, and then the July Public Enquiry.

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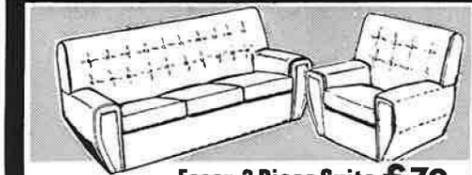
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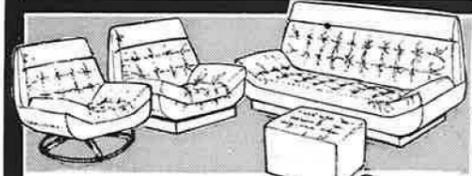
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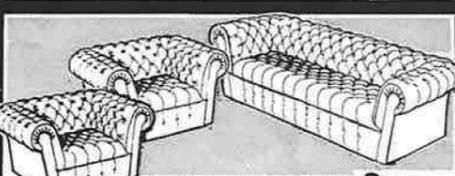
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CORONATION CUPS, a series of vivid recollections of Ron Barnes' childhood in Bethnal Green and Stoke Newington, could be easily read aloud, for rich Cockney slang abounds in frequent dialogue (a glossary helps the bemused reader).

Three generations are explored: notable personalities emerge, first of Gran Gullis, a Tory-aspiring and immaculate lady who serves butter and jam on a white table-cloth and pronounces her h's and t's, contrasting with the beer-guzzling and enormous bellied Gran Barnes, born in the workhouse, nourishing her grandson on bread and dripping ("Ere y'are you little bleeder, get that across yer guts.") served on a newspaper-covered table.

Barnes traces his parents' courtship and marriage, his mother's struggle with overwork and lack of money, his father's endless quest for the 'right' job, running the gamut from van boy, bookie's runner, chimney sweep, ice-cream salesman, to Music Hall comedian (Dr. Jelley).

He paints a vivid picture of the world of East End boyhood: the games of conkers, bobs and bobsters and cigarette cards, gang life and its favourite activities of hoisting and tea leafing (pickpocketing and thieving - more often than not to enhance meagre larder supplies), and slinging 'unsavoury mis-siles' - the favourite being horse dung - at posh passers-by. Sauciness rather

than maliciousness is the prevailing attitude: the good old V-sign against the dogged enemies of poverty, futility, unemployment, bugs ("mahogany baxters") mice and fleas.

As in Dickens pungent cameos abound: Dobson the pig-faced butcher; Poshit, neat and tidy and a Mum's boy and thus a difficult companion to play with; Ernie, cross eyes, with a weak bladder; Queenie, the 18-stone flower seller; the harassed one-eyed Jewish cabinet-maker who retaliates at Barnes' gang by removing his glass eye and leering at the boys.

Coronation Cups is a book no academic or historian could have written; for an entertaining and gut-felt account of life in old Hackney, it is the real thing.
Ann Wickett Humphry

**COUNCIL RESCUE
PLAYGROUND**

HACKNEY COUNCIL gave a grant to enable the Adventure Playground, on the corner of Upton & Downham Rds, to be kept open for the summer project.

ILEA have provided grants for playleaders salaries for the last few years, but this year our application was refused. After weeks of uncertainty Hackney Council stepped in at the last minute.

This will probably be the last project held on the old playground. Work has already started clearing the area adjacent to it, where the new playground will be, and one bay of the factory will be used by the playground as well.

If you would like to lend a hand with the playground in any way, make contact with the playleader Clive, who would like to meet you.

Guy Gervis

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smallads

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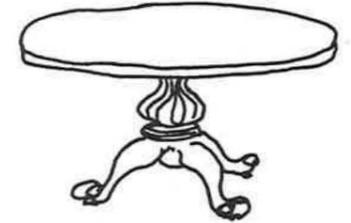
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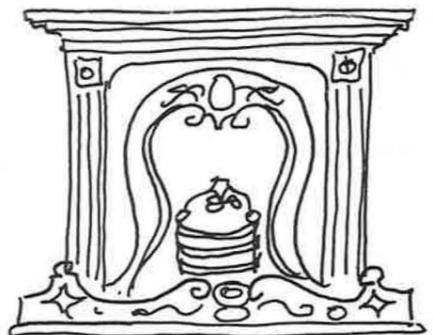
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NO, FRED did not fly here of her own volition, choosing to roost among the other De Beauvoir pigeons, nor did she apply to Brown & Brown for a short-term perching lease. She was brought here last year in a large parrot's cage bought in Petticoat Lane when her mistress, Anne Hopewell of Ufton Grove, moved into the area.

It was Anne's son Dan, who 5 years ago rescued two tiny pigeons from a derelict attic in Canonbury. Dan, a mighty determined 13 year old with a real love for animals, carried out a feeding schedule which required force feeds of milk-soaked bread every 3 hours for 6 weeks! Only Fred survived, and has continued to thrive.

Hoping to free Fred at maturity, Anne and Dan found to their astonishment that Fred never developed much rapport with other pigeons, obviously preferring the more sparkling companionship of humans. Now 5 years old, she found the move to De Beauvoir relatively effortless.

In February, some anxiety occurred when Fred, until that time thought to be male, had to be operated on for an impacted egg. Now recovering from her convalescence, she spends her days as a lady of leisure in her parrot's cage indoors, or suns herself in a large aviary in the garden, indulging in an occasional flight around the neighbourhood.

When asked how she fancied De Beauvoir, Fred (now Fredericka, strictly speaking) chortled and cooed from aloft her favourite book shelf, gracefully swooping down to settle on her favourite perch, her mistress's head. Somehow, I think she's here to stay.
Ann Humphry

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