



Funding Success!

Roman Way Residents Group has been successful in acquiring funding through the Guide Neighbourhood Programme to support Development of the group, Community Development and Environmental Works.

The Guide Neighbourhood Programme is made up of community organisations that have successfully dealt with issues facing their community and have shown good practice in doing so. The Department of Communities and Local Government fund these organisations, in order that they might pass on the lessons they have learnt and to support other emerging community groups who might face similar problems.

Burrowes Street TMO have been really helpful to Roman Way, providing advice to members of the Committee, hosting trips to look around their neighbourhoods and visiting a meeting of the Roman Way Residents' Group to give a presentation and share 'top tips'.

As well as providing help and advice to Roman Way, Burrowes Street have some grant funding from the Home Office they are allowed to give

to resident groups. This grant funding has strict criteria.

Because Burrowes Street is a Tenant Management Organisation (TMO) and Roman Way is seeking to set up its own TMO, it was agreed that the grant would be spent on preparing for the TMO.

Therefore, the money will be spent on the following:

- Training up committee members of the Roman Way Residents' Group
- Providing equipment for the administration of the group (computers, printer etc) which will be moved into the group's office when we have secured one
- Community Notice Boards
- Welcome packs for new (and existing if they want one!) residents
- Running a community clean-up day and bulb planting event (this was held last week)
- A community event at Christmas. This event will include carol singing, mince pies and (hopefully) a visit from Santa.

Things like the Christmas event and bulb planting day are seen as good practice in helping communities work towards larger goals. There is bound to be frustration at carrying out 'smaller' projects when there are so many big things that need to be done. We do understand, but these events provide important ways to ensure we all work together for the overall goal; to make our neighbourhood the best place possible to live.

Want More Information?

If you would like any more information about any of the articles in this newsletter or to get involved with the Roman Way Residents' Group, you can contact us:

By phone: 0800 0234 807 (ask for Kate or Daphne)

By e-mail: romanwayresidentsgroup@msn.com

By post: RWRG, PO Box 13667, Birmingham, B16 6DU

Free Spring Bulbs

You can receive free spring bulbs to plant in your front garden, or around your block of flats.

It's also possible to hire garden tools from the group to plant your bulbs.

Give Daphne a call on 0800 0234 807 for more information and to receive your free bulbs.

ROMAN WAY

RESIDENTS' GROUP

Neighbourhood News

Issue 4

"It's been a busy time" since our last newsletter.

Firstly, a huge thank you to everyone who took part in the bulb planting day on Saturday 11th November, including Singleton's and Sainsbury's for their support. We filled 2 skips with rubbish and garden waste and planted over 4000 crocus and narcissi bulbs.



We're really looking forward to seeing the flowers

appearing in the spring. Also over the summer we've been working hard on developing ideas for the neighbourhood's tenant management organisation; the article below will give you more detail. Please make sure you have your say at the Test of Opinion for the TMO which will be coming up early in the New Year. See you soon!

Allan Bennett,

Our Right to Manage....

In our earlier newsletters we informed you that a Right to Manage (RTM) notice had been served on Birmingham City Council. This was a crucial step in our exploration of setting up a Tenant Management Organisation (TMO) to improve management of Council homes in our neighbourhood.

The council accepted that Right to Manage notice, and are supportive of our work to set up a TMO. Since then, we have been concentrating on getting as many people involved in this process as possible and working out what sort of TMO we might be

looking at (i.e. what services it will run on behalf of the Council). This part of the set-up process is called the 'Feasibility Study' and has three main objectives:

- Communicating with as many people as possible about a TMO and what services it could deliver through a proper estate office; gathering your views and questions;
- receiving training on how to run a TMO;
- holding a vote called a 'test of opinion' that all tenants and leaseholders can take part in.

You can see the results of our consultation with residents over the summer, on the inside

pages of this newsletter.

What happens next?

Early in the New Year there will be a 'test of opinion'; giving all council tenants and leaseholders in the area a chance to say whether they're happy to go forward. We'll be sending you more information on the test of opinion in the following weeks so watch this space. In the meantime, if you have any questions on the Right to Manage process, please contact Kate or Daphne, our advisers, on **0800 0234 807**.



Winners!!



There were two winners of our TMO quiz Hazel Cockcroft and Sophia Mannan (pictured above with her winning entry) who each received vouchers to the value of £20. Lauren Shepherd won a special prize for her drawing of a place she would like to live (See below for a photo of Lauren and part of her winning picture). Look out for Lauren's drawing, which will be appearing on the notice boards when they're up!

Thank you to everyone who took part and congratulation once again to our winners.



Your local housing team

There are three new faces at the Edgbaston Constituency Housing Team. Below, they introduce themselves to you...

Jackie O'Callaghan – District Housing Manager

"Hello my name is Jackie O'Callaghan the District Housing Manager. I have worked for the Housing Department for over sixteen years in a variety of roles and have been a District Housing Manager for over two years. I am very much looking forward to working on the Edgbaston District and am keen to work with tenants, leaseholders and other stakeholders to look at how we can improve services locally to ensure good quality of life for our residents."

Mark Rodgers – Local Housing Manager

"Hello, I'm Mark Rodgers, the new Local Housing Manager based at Attwood House. I shall be responsible for some 30 people providing estate management services and tackling anti-social behaviour. My main aims are to work with residents' representatives and key service providers to develop staff to provide excellent services. I look forward to meeting and working with residents from the Roman Way Area

Philomena Cronin – Housing Officer

"Hello, my name is Philomena Cronin, I am the new Housing Officer covering Estate management in the Harborne and Edgbaston areas, which includes the area represented by the Roman Way Residents Group. I have been a Housing Officer for 12 years, and completely support the need to work with residents and other agencies to help improve housing and the environment."

Hospital Project Update

Residents recently received a letter from the builders of the hospital development, informing us that they would be working on a Sunday before Christmas.

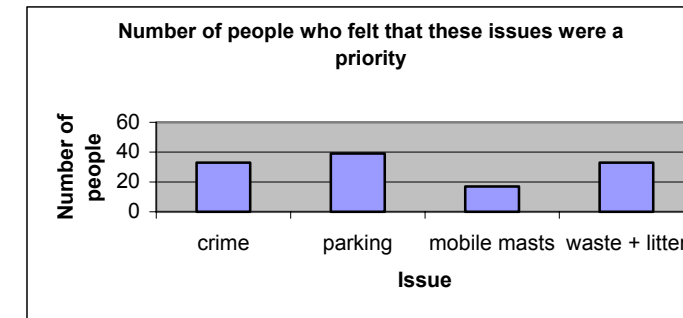
With the help of a local councillor, we were successful in reminding the hospital project of their promise to not work on Sundays and insisting they stuck to that arrangement.

We are now currently negotiating over the problematic tv signal many are experiencing. We will continue to work hard to represent residents' views regarding the building that is going on next to our estate.

Summer 2006: Consultation

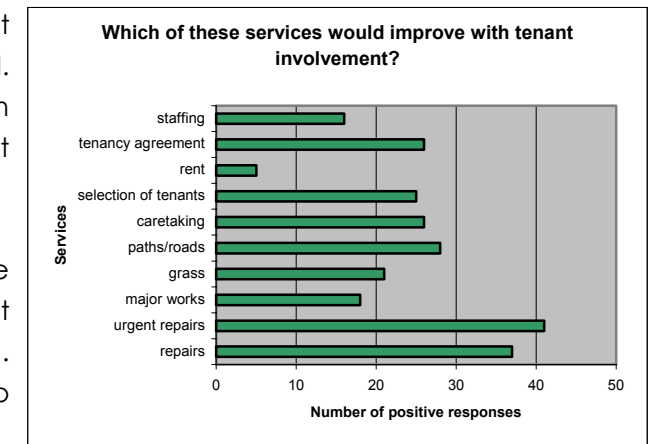
For two weeks in July and August we carried out our summer consultation and we would like to say a big Thank You to all who came to talk to us!

We were consulting with you regarding Tenant Management Organisations (TMO); giving information about them, answering any queries you had and asking how you would like a TMO in your area to look. We did this by pitching a gazebo in various parts of the area, and knocking on your doors.



We asked you about the improvement of issues in the area and whether they were still considered priorities. The chart to the left shows that problems with parking continue to be the main priority.

We also asked you which Housing services you felt could be improved if tenants had more control. The chart to the right shows your responses, with repairs and urgent repairs being the most popular.



We heard some very interesting views about the area, and how you felt a Tenant Management Organisation should look in the Roman Way area. Also, membership of Roman Way Residents Group has increased to over 100 households!

Your responses regarding a Tenant Management Organisation were positive, with over 90% of residents we talked to saying that they were in favour of and would support the setting up of a TMO.

As a result of the consultation we organised a trip to visit an established TMO in Walsall – Burrowes Street, all who attended had a good time and the feedback was positive. Thank you for your contribution in the consultation – which made it a big success! If you would like a copy of the consultation report, please contact Kate or Daphne on 0800 0234 807.

Learning Hub on its Way

Councillor James Hutchings is the Council nominated governor of the University Hospital Birmingham NHS Foundation Trust which manages the QE and Selly Oak hospitals. James reports that the Trust is building a "Learning Hub" to recruit future staff and to assist local regeneration.

The Hub will provide basic skills training for unemployed people from school age upwards. The Hub will support trainees into employment by working with employers. The Hub will concentrate on employment in construction and healthcare which includes a great many medical and ancillary jobs with different skill levels. James adds that this is a great opportunity to work in a very important field. Anybody interested should telephone 414 9930.