

SPRINGBOARD



MARCH 2012

DIARY OF FORTHCOMING EVENTS

SUNDAY 18 MARCH: MOTHER'S DAY AT ST JOHN'S CHURCH

There will be a special Family Communion Service for Mothering Sunday at 10am in the church with distribution of posies of spring flowers (made by children and fathers) to all women. All are welcome.

FRIDAY ²³ MARCH: "SPRING INTO SPRING" BARN DANCE IN THE PARISH HALL, GROVE LANE at 8pm

Drive away the winter (and economic) blues by welcoming the spring at our annual barn dance. Jackie and Dominic, together with Plan B will provide the music, with Liz and John doing the calling. This is an occasion where all the members of our community, families, the young and not so young can come together and enjoy themselves. A great evening out!!

Tickets are £7 for adults, £4 for children (16 or under), £18 for family (2 adults + 2 children), and include a delicious hot supper and salads. Soft drinks and alcoholic drinks will be available at the licenced bar. Purchase your tickets beforehand from: Gordon Bell, 15 Grove Lane (8548 8540), Jackie Steinitz, 26 Geneva Road (8541 4432), Karol Smal, 9 Grove Lane (8549 8424) or McCluskey's Off-Licence, Bloomfield Road.



SUNDAY 1 APRIL TO SUNDAY 8 APRIL: EASTER HOLY WEEK AT ST JOHN'S CHURCH

On Palm Sunday (1 April) everyone meets at St John's School at 9.45am where palms will be blessed and distributed, before processing to the church for Parish Communion. On Wednesday (4 April) evening there will be a reflective service with Holy Communion. On Thursday (5 April) at 7.30pm an informal service around a shared meal. On Good Friday (6 April) there will be a children's Workshop from 1.00-3pm in the church, followed by a Good Friday service for all ages. On Easter Sunday (8 April) the Easter Communion at 10am is followed by an egg hunt for the children.

Everyone in the Spring Grove Area is welcome to join the community choir for the Easter Sunday service. Rehearsals are in the Church at 8pm on Tuesdays 20 & 27 March and 3 April.

THURSDAY 26 APRIL: A.G.M. IN THE PARISH HALL, GROVE LANE at 8pm

The ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING of the SPRING GROVE RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION will be held in the Parish Hall. All residents, longstanding or recently arrived in the area, are welcome to attend. Rev. Jonathan Wilkes (Rector of the Parish of All Saints and St John's) will outline the regeneration plans for St John's and the possible implications of these for the Parish Hall, and will answer questions from the floor. (*Please see overleaf*). There will also be our Ward Councillors and representatives from the University and the Grove Ward Safer Neighbourhood Police team to answer your questions on matters concerning our area. Details to follow in the next Springboard.

FRIDAY 27 APRIL: THE 'FRIDAY CAFÉ' IN ST JOHN'S CHURCH from 9-11.30am

Drop in for breakfast or a mid-morning break at the 'Friday Café'. All are welcome for freshly brewed coffee, latte, tea and toast and delicious home made cakes. The café will raise funds for Help for Heroes, and there will also be beautiful plants and handmade wooden garden items for sale (from the Hampton Court Stud Nursery horticultural project).

SATURDAY 2 JUNE: STREET PARTY IN BLOOMFIELD ROAD (not Tues 5 June)

Following on from the great success of last April's Royal Wedding Street Party, the SGRA and St John's Church Regeneration Fund Committee plan to hold another enjoyable Street Party! Funds raised will be divided between the SGRA (for the much needed refurbishment of the floor of the Parish Hall or other community purposes) and the St John's Regeneration Fund. A Street Party Committee has been set up in and any offer of help will be greatly appreciated - please contact Karol Smal on 8549 8424 or email karolsmal@blueyonder.co.uk, or contact Emma Poole on 078101 85201 (emmakatherinepoole@hotmail.com)

St John's Parish Hall, Grove Lane

As many residents will know a feasibility study is underway to consider plans for regenerating and improving the facilities in St John's Church. One of the options which have been mooted to help fund the redevelopment is the sale of the Parish Hall on Grove Lane, though the Church has said that this is not the preferred course of action.

Nonetheless it is clear from recent articles and the unprecedented volume of letters in the local press that the issue has generated strong feelings within the community, particularly as the community has been strongly involved in financing and maintaining the hall for the last 20 years. The SGRA Committee had a recent meeting with Jonathan Wilkes (Rector of the Parish of All Saints and St John's), and a letter from him outlining the church's plans and position is reproduced below together with a note on the recent history of community involvement in the Hall.

Rev. Wilkes has kindly agreed to come to our AGM on Thursday 26 April to explain the plans for the Church and the Hall. He has said that if it appeared that the sale of the Hall might be necessary there would be wider consultation within the community.

If you would like to make a comment ahead of the AGM please either (a) use the contact page on the website www.springgrovekingston.co.uk/contact2.php, or (b) email the Secretary, Jackie Steinitz on jackie@steinitz.org, or (c) contact one of the committee members listed below. All comments will be forwarded to Jonathan Wilkes.

More detailed information about the plans for the church and the parish hall can be found on the SGRA website on a dedicated page www.springgrovekingston.co.uk/churchplans2012.php.

Recent History of Community Involvement in the Parish Hall

Residents who have recently moved into the area may not be aware of the role of the Parish Hall in the community, and so an outline of its history would be informative.

Over 300 people were squeezed into the Hall on its opening in 1903, and since then it has been at the heart of the community, hosting many events, celebrations and clubs – even a rabbit exhibition club!

Around 20 years ago, the local community became more involved with the management of the Hall, with Joan McConn and Roger McClaverty being elected at the SGRA AGM as our representatives on the Parish Hall Committee. Joan has dealt with the day to day management and hall bookings since then. A few years later, SGRA Committee member, Gordon Bell, was elected to the Parish Hall Committee and has been Treasurer of the Parish Hall to date.

The Hall is used daily by Kingston Kindergarten, a pre-school nursery rated "outstanding" by Ofsted; by two Badminton groups; by the Spring Grove Fringe theatre group with a number of productions each year; by the local band, Plan B, for rehearsals and performances; by the SGRA for meetings and the Annual Barn Dance (the next event is on Friday 23 March); and by various individual lettings for quiz nights, children's parties, christening parties etc.

In the past 15 years the local community has raised over £15,000 for improvements to the Hall and its facilities. Plan B has had various fund raising functions and has donated over £5,500 and the Spring Grove Fringe has donated nearly £4,000 (the theatre group has also recently contributed over £1,500 towards facilities in St Johns Church). The SGRA, through various functions, raffles and street parties has raised over £5,000 for the Hall. In addition to these groups, other local residents have also made individual donations, and all groups and residents have been involved in giving time and effort towards decorating and other work, particularly prior to the Hall's 100th Anniversary in 2003 (approximately 500 working hours).

In addition to funds raised for the Parish Hall, events organised in the hall (by SGF, Plan B Band, SGRA and others) have also raised tens of thousands of pounds for various local, national and international charities, as well as for repairs and facilities in St John's Church.

As well as being the centre of our community, the Hall is in the Grove Crescent Conservation area and also has architectural merit in its own right. Last autumn, the Church commissioned a Surveyor's Inspection and Report on the Parish Hall. In his report the Chartered Surveyor from Thomas Ford & Partners states that "the main gabled elevation of the hall is very attractive and an unusual design for suburban London and more reminiscent of the seaside towns. The lean-to roof covers a veranda, which is attractively designed." The report highlights the repair work that needs to be done, particularly on the floor which might have to be replaced. However, in his conclusion the Surveyor states that the hall was "originally well built in 1903 and is fundamentally sound... It is clear that people spend a great deal of time working on the hall and this is manifested in its generally good condition."

To celebrate the Queen's Diamond Jubilee, members of the SGRA Committee and the St John's Church Regeneration Fund Raising Committee have joined forces to organise a street party in Bloomfield Road and Church grounds - raising funds for the SGRA [for the hall floor] and for the Church Regeneration Fund. In the future, SGRA, the Church, together with Spring Grove Fringe and Plan B and other residents, would hope to raise money for needed Church repairs, and to ensure that both the Hall and the Church continue to flourish in our community.

Letter from Rev Jonathan Wilkes on St John's Church and Parish Hall *(a fuller version can be seen on the SGRA website)*

Over the last 9 months or so the Church Council at St John's have been considering development plans to create extensive community facilities at the church. Though the impetus for this has been the urgent need to replace failing heating and lighting systems and to address important access issues into the building, the need offers an opportunity to make much better use of the space as a community facility. The church is the largest and most prominent public building in the neighbourhood and its redevelopment offers a wonderful opportunity to create flexible and accessible facilities for us all. The scheme will provide a large performance space, catering facilities for gatherings and celebrations, and smaller rooms for meeting. A feasibility study about how this might be achieved is on display in the church (and on its website), or on the SGRA website.

Alongside this, the church is also reviewing its management of the other community space it owns and is responsible for - the Parish Hall. We are looking at how the Hall can best be used as a community asset and some of you will know that, as part of our considerations, the prospect of selling the Hall has had to be raised.

I should stress, here, two things. Firstly, that it is only an *option* at this stage (one of a number being explored) and, secondly, that it is **not** our preferred way forward. As a valued community facility we would hope not to have to sell the Hall if at all possible.

That the possibility of its sale has even been raised at all is simply a matter of practical necessity. To fulfil the potential that the Church has as a community asset, and to avoid it falling into unusable disrepair, will cost anything up to £1.5 million. As a Grade II listed building the Church is, not only a permanent feature of the neighbourhood (unlike other buildings) but it also provides a unique opportunity to offer a wide range of facilities for the people who live here.

Our hope will be that we can raise the money we need without selling the Hall, but common sense dictates that we should have an open mind about the best way to take forward the community assets that we are responsible for.

This is why we are inviting an open, community wide, discussion about how best to resolve the urgent and real problems that we face while, at the same time, ensure that the best facilities for our life together are available to us.

If you have any thoughts or suggestions we'd be really pleased to know them.

Kelly Arms, Alfred Road

The Kelly Arms in Alfred Road was sold to a local developer, Paul Stratos, several years ago and when his plans for converting it into multiply occupied student accommodation was turned down by RBK after local protests he went back to the drawing board.

On 22 February, the SGRA arranged for local residents to meet Paul in the Parish Hall where he presented the new proposals. The first and second floor (the current loft) would be converted into a high end five bedroom luxury maisonette, although an alternative could be a four bedroom flat on the first floor and a one bedroom flat on the second. The impact on the building externally would be minimal and all its attractive features would be retained.

The ground floor cannot be converted to residential use at present, but also cannot be used as a public house. In the interim it will be let out as a bookshop for Colourstrings, a charity type organization selling specialist books, CD's etc for children. The shop is due to open shortly.

The meeting was well attended by 30 residents and in the Q & A session it became clear that the plans were generally well received, although there were reservations about the two flat proposal.

Paul agreed to communicate with local residents in the future through the SGRA.

The **SPRING GROVE FRINGE** February Panto 'Jason and the Argonauts' was very successful and a donation is being made to the Princess Alice Hospice.

The Spring Grove Residents' Association

Any resident wishing to join the committee or help with community activities please contact Alan Leeds on 8287 5135 or Jackie Steinitz on 8541 4482. The current SGRA Committee Members are:

Gordon Bell	15 Grove Lane	8549 8540	Emma Poole	2 Horace Rd	07810 185204
Phil Chapman	12 Alfred Rd	8541 3809	Karol Smal (Treasurer)	9 Grove Lane	8549 8424
Phil Harvey	76 Villiers Rd	8549 4677	Pippa Sparks	25 Denmark Rd	8549 6099
Paul Hemmings	33 Portland Rd	07960-187727	Jackie Steinitz (Secretary)	26 Geneva Rd	8541 4482
Alan Leeds (Chairman)	10a Grove Close	8287 5135	Dawn Trigg	10 Glenthorne Rd	8541 4834
Natascha Logan	7 Nicholson Mews	8549 0844	Sean Yeates	8 Bloomfield Rd	8546 4688

THE SGRA WEBSITE www.springgrovekingston.co.uk for the latest news and links to other relevant sites. There is a page for local businesses and if you would like to advertise your business or have any contributions, news, small ads or suggestions contact jackie@springgrovekingston.co.uk.

PARISH HALL

To hire the Parish Hall, Grove Lane, for social functions and children's parties please contact Joan McConn on 8549 8424.

Badminton Players in the Parish Hall The Monday and Thursday Evening Badminton clubs are keen to attract new members - have fun and keep fit at the same time. Go along on the relevant evening at 8pm or contact David McIntosh (Mondays) on 8399 1208 or Les Nelson (Thursday) on 8399 0218. To play at any other time please ring Joan.

Neo-Nunchaku Organisation at St John's Parish Hall, Grove Lane. Novice classes are on alternate Sundays at 6.30-7.30pm. Ring 8337 6181 for more info. NEO teaches a spectrum of techniques in a holistic way, integrating related techniques to keep the learning process rewarding and fulfilling.

Movement class Wednesdays, 6.45 to 7.30 Low impact class to music ranging from Motown to 70's disco music. Just turn up. £5 per class.

KINGSTON TOWN CENTRE RANGERS walk the town centre and our area to deal with various problems.

Contact the ranger team on 8547 1221 to report any graffiti, flyposting, supermarket trolleys etc. www.kingstonfirst.co.uk

Looking for a holiday?

Why not escape to the sun for a spring break in Tenerife.

*Call Karol Smal on
8549 8424 for price
and details of
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apartment next to
the beach in the
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