



# HIGHFIELD RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION

[www.highfieldresidents.org.uk](http://www.highfieldresidents.org.uk)

Newsletter – Autumn 2012

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## STOP PRESS

### GOVERNMENT PROPOSALS TO ALLOW UP TO 8 METRE EXTENSIONS WITHOUT PLANNING PERMISSION

At the time of going to print, the details of this and the Consultation are yet to be announced.

However, as part of the national outcry against this, HRA has already lobbied all three of Southampton's MPs, written a submission to a Government Select Committee and has joined other national groups in opposing this iniquitous proposal.

To read our submissions log onto to our website.

## HRA NEEDS YOU!

**NEW MEMBERS AND COMMITTEE MEMBERS NEEDED NOW**

## Family Christmas Party

**Saturday 8th December**

**2.15pm – 5.00pm**

**Portswood Primary School**

**£5.00 for member's children, £7.00 for non members**

**Dancing, games, magic show with the Potty Professor, party tea, prizes for all and finishing with a visit from Father Christmas**

Application form at the back of the newsletter

## FAREWELL TO HIGHFIELD

I first moved to Highfield in 1978, with my husband and 18 month old daughter, when we bought a house in Oakhurst Road. We had another daughter about a month after we moved into our house and 22 months after that we had a son. We needed more space so we moved to Oakmount Avenue and after 5 happy years there, and having expanded our family again by adopting a son, we moved to Blenheim Ave where we remained for 26 years. In those early days Highfield was probably the perfect place to raise a family – it had the feel of a village but with the advantage of being close to the city centre and right next door to the Common. In Highfield we had our little parade of shops with a bakers, barbers, corner shop, paper shop and a tiny antique shop. We had the Post Office, hairdressers and another antique shop next door to the Highfield Pub. Portswood High Street had every type of shop you could need, including a furniture store, a toy shop, a jewellers, a book and art supplies shop and a department store called Storrs. Between my four children we managed to sample all of the schools that Highfield had to offer, Oakmount Prep, Highfield First and Middle, Portswood and also St Winifred's and Greggs (before they moved out of town). They attended ballet classes, Brownies, Cubs, ice-skating and tennis lessons - all within walking distance. We visited

the zoo and the Hawthorn Centre when it replaced the rather sad menagerie that the zoo had become. We went on bat walks and dipped in the ponds for river boatmen and other mini-beasts and later the boys fished in the lake.

I worked at the Royal South Hants Hospital in the Wessex Radiotherapy Centre, first as a Radiographer and subsequently as Service Improvement Lead for Cancer Services, so Highfield was ideally placed for access to work even when Cancer Services relocated to SGH.

I attended the University - first by taking advantage of their extensive range of evening courses and then as a mature student when I did an English degree – which was such an enjoyable experience I was tempted to carry on but instead did a certificate in Cancer Health Education and returned to Cancer Care. My second daughter also did an English degree at Southampton Uni and has started a PhD there. I think that we all took full advantage of the benefits that living in Highfield had to offer us as a family.

Although I still believe that Highfield is a lovely place to live there have been a lot of changes which have been



...continued from p1

detrimental to the area. Sadly the High Street does not have the same variety of shops that it used to have and the little parade of shops on Highfield Lane is boarded up. We lost our Post Office, despite a vociferous campaign by local residents and HRA. Many of our roads have been swamped by HMOs and this has led to whole roads appearing scruffy and uncared for.

Throughout this time HRA has fought to preserve Highfield as a wonderful place to live and so I decided to join the committee as they were desperate for a secretary. After seven years, and with lots of changes taking place in the committee, I became Vice Chair with responsibility for day-to-day admin tasks and I also co-ordinate the production of this newsletter. I have also been the secretary for the Oakmount Triangle Residents' Association for several years.

However after 33 years in Highfield we felt that it was time for a change and so we have moved out to sample the rural delights of the Hampshire countryside. Which leaves HRA with a bit of a problem as the committee has undergone several changes this year and is lacking the number of people required to fulfil its workload without putting a great deal of pressure on those who already give so much of their time. Sue Hartley, also having moved out of Highfield, resigned as Vice Chair although she has kindly continued to help out by chairing committee meetings since Jerry Gillen stood down as Chair. After many years of dedication and hard work as head of the committee Jerry felt that it was time for a change. He hasn't left the committee and is now responsible for Public Relations and Liaison. He is also assisting Keith Reed with planning matters.

Jerry's particular concern is the, up until now, unchecked proliferation of HMOs in Highfield which has had the effect of changing the character of many of our roads as they have replaced family homes. His dedication to this cause has been heroic and you can read about the progress that is being made in his piece which follows this.

Jill Baston has taken over as Minutes Secretary for which we are extremely grateful. Professor Roger Brown, who was the Vice Chancellor of Solent University and also Chair of the Oakmount Triangle Residents' Association, has agreed to Chair the monthly meetings which will be of enormous benefit to the Association.

As I am no longer a resident it would not be appropriate for me to continue my involvement with the newsletter. If there is anyone in the area who has experience of any form of newsletter production or any writing or editing experience HRA would love to hear from you. Also I will have to resign from the committee which will leave a vacancy so if you can spare a few hours a month please consider joining and helping HRA in its efforts to preserve Highfield for future generations of families to enjoy as mine have and yours are doing now. It is not all work and no play; I have met many new friends through my connection with HRA and found the experience interesting and rewarding.

I am sure that there are members who have lived in Highfield longer than me and have experiences that they would like to share – please send them to us. Please contact HRA though the address on the website or using the details in your joining pack.

Caroline Knight

## HMOS – WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

Now first, what is the definition of an HMO (House in Multiple Occupation)? A brief description is any property shared by *“three or more unrelated people”*. There are also *two* types of HMOs; one that is occupied by between *three and six persons* which is now classified in planning terms as *“Class C4”* [smaller HMO] and any number above that, which is known as *“Sui Generis”* [larger HMO].

On March 23rd this year, the City Council introduced what is known as an **Article 4 Direction (A4D)** across the whole city, removing what is known as *Permitted Development Rights*: what this means is that anyone now buying an existing family home wishing to convert it to an HMO, **must** first apply for *Planning Permission*. At the same time, the Council also introduced a **Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)** in support of the **A4D**. The key elements of this are that there are now **thresholds** for a maximum permitted number of HMOs in a given area, which are 10% for Bassett, Portswood & Swaythling Wards and 20% for the rest of the city. Additionally, the SPD says **“a radius of 40 metres or a minimum of ten houses is the area within which the threshold should be calculated”**, which effectively means there should be no more than one HMO within this radius. None of this is retrospective unfortunately. As these *thresholds* are already far exceeded in both Portswood, Bassett and Bevois Wards, this should mean no more HMOs will

be allowed in these areas, but at least anyone wanting to create a new one will have to first apply for *Planning Permission* and residents will then have the opportunity to consider the merits of the application and object if they wish. There is also something known as *flipping*; this allows an existing HMO to revert to a family home without losing the right to become an HMO again at a later date, whilst in the same ownership. Currently, if a house was a Class C4 HMO before 23rd March (Sui Generis always needed PP), or has been used as an HMO continuously for a period of ten years it then has Planning Permission by default unfortunately. This illustrates the importance of residents keeping a watch out for unauthorised conversions and reporting this to the Council requesting enforcement action be immediately taken against the owner. The Council can also issue a *Planning Contravention Notice* requiring the owner to desist, but there is no current mechanism for the issuing of a Stop Order, unfortunately. As part of NORA (National Organisation of Residents Associations) and the National HMO Lobby, we are currently lobbying Government on this matter and that of the inadequacies of enforcement. Hopefully this helps clarify the situation,

Jerry Gillen

## UGANDA

I arrived to work in Kampala, Uganda, in February this year. It has been a roller coaster time with the challenges of everyday living in Africa balanced against the rewards of the work that I am involved in.

Firstly, a bit about me: having lived in Southampton for 35 years, the last 30 of them in Highfield and having had a full and generally rewarding career in local authority children's services I opted to take early retirement and fulfill a long held plan to complete my career in a developing country. I learnt about Child's i Foundation (CiF) in Kampala, Uganda, through a former colleague who had herself considered relocating there but was unable to because of family commitments. She knew I was interested in a social work post abroad and that my family circumstances enabled me to make such a move. CiF is a British charity operating in Kampala with the aim of finding families for some of the thousands of babies that are abandoned by their mothers in Uganda. CiF's work includes the residential care of abandoned babies within Malaika, its babies' home, the tracing of their extending families and resettlement with them if possible, and failing that the recruitment of local adoptive families for them. No other organisation in Uganda had previously sought to recruit Ugandan adoptive carers for Ugandan babies and most are sent abroad for international adoption. CiF has shown that, whilst the care of unrelated children is not part of the Ugandan culture there are plenty of families who are willing to do this.

The post of general manager played to all my social work experience and whilst the context could not be more different I am managing almost the same services that I was during my long social work management career in Southampton - family support, residential care, fostering and adoption. There could not be a more rewarding place to put my experience to full use; the stories of the abandoned babies are compelling and the transformation in their fortunes from the time they are referred to CiF immediate and life changing.



The babies are abandoned by desperate mothers in circumstances of poverty, rape and family rejection which often force them to choose between keeping them, in the knowledge that with no food or shelter they could die, or leaving them abandoned in hospitals, car parks or on the streets. Babies that are abandoned in Uganda are placed into babies' homes, sometimes called orphanages (even

though 80% are not orphans) and then transferred into long term children's institutions or made available for adoption abroad. CiF has proven that for two thirds of abandoned children, relatives can be traced by social workers and the children resettled with their own extended families. Where relatives cannot be found, CiF places babies for adoption within Ugandan families – one of the first organisations to develop Ugandan adoption for Ugandan babies.

I spent the first week in my new job learning about the way the charity works by immersing myself in the babies' home and going out on visits to search for the babies' extended families with the social workers. On my second day I went with a social worker to collect a baby from a police station. The next day we entered the slum district in the torrential rain, making separate visits to the possible father, mother and aunt of the abandoned child. None of them showed any concern or care for the baby and would not take responsibility for her. The trip, although only a few miles from the babies' home, took about five hours on a motorcycle taxi and involved me in wading through puddles and mud, the only white person in a deprived slum area, besieged by desperate people wanting handouts. That baby was Leah. Her mother, a prostitute, was traced and arrested for child neglect. Leah required surgery to her tonsils and adenoids and for her huge umbilical hernia. Even so, as you can see from the photo below, she is thriving whilst we search for a special Ugandan family to be her permanent home



All the babies at the babies' home have equally compelling stories.

When I started work at CiF my brief was to take on the management of the organisation in Uganda until such a time that I could recruit and train a Ugandan replacement. This task may be the biggest challenge of them all as both management and professional social work are undeveloped fields in Uganda but I hope to be home within a year.

If you would like to find out more about the work that we do or to support it please visit our website: [www.childsfoundation.org](http://www.childsfoundation.org) or enter Child's i foundation into YouTube to watch some of the videos we have produced.

*Sue Allen*

## HIGHFIELD RESIDENT IN OLYMPIC CEREMONY

Adrian Robinson, a Highfield resident, has been an avid cyclist for the past 21 years. He holds a British Cycling race licence as he competes in road races in his spare time.

It was Adrian's affiliation with British Cycling that opened the door to the Olympics. His story began in January, when he received an email from British Cycling asking if he would be interested in being a cyclist in the 2012 Opening Ceremony. He jumped at the opportunity and immediately sent back his Olympic Volunteer application form. This rush was followed by an agonising wait, before he finally heard in mid-February that he had been called to audition. Adrian headed off to 3 Mills Studios in London, where he had to first prove he could actually ride a bike (he said it was akin to a "cycling proficiency test"), before then being asked to add some dance moves whilst still riding. As cycling best practice dictates that moving anything other than your legs is a waste of energy, Adrian said it was very amusing "watching one hundred and fifty cyclists trying to un-learn their efficient cycling style, wiggling their hips, rolling their shoulders, and bobbing up and down".

Adrian left the audition having been told he would hear by the end of March. After another two months of agonising silence, he received news that he would be a cyclist in the Opening Ceremony.

Rehearsals started in May in Dagenham, East London. Things kicked off with a briefing where volunteer cyclists were told that they would form part of a seven-act cycling spectacular at the ceremony. Adrian's hopes were high, but then came "the heart-sinking moment when we were first told we were going to be dove bikes..." Instantly Adrian's mind was filled with an image of himself pedalling around the stadium in a comedy dove costume, looking like a buffoon. "The other cyclists, professional BMXers, were going to be doing backflips, etc and so we felt very dubious about our role. Then we were shown a CGI video of what the doves would actually be doing and I was dumbstruck. It was absolutely incredible, and my hopes soared". Danny Boyle, the Ceremony's director, explained that his vision was for the whole act to be a massive showcase for cycling, his ethos being that if you want a city to really work, you have to get rid of cars and replace them with bikes.

The team moved to the Olympic stadium in June for their final eight rehearsals. They practised with the other bicycle sections until the start of July, when things changed. Timing had dictated that the cycling spectacular had to be trimmed down, and they could only keep the volunteer section. For Adrian and his fellow doves this was met with mixed emotions, the showcase for cycling was diminished, but at the same time it did mean that their section got to be on stage for four times longer than first planned.

The final dress rehearsal was held just two days before the ceremony. All the volunteers were given two tickets to enable their family members to come along, so there was a crowd to appreciate most of the run-through. However, the stadium was emptied before the dove bikes were unleashed, in an effort to keep them top secret. Adrian said "the practice went really well, and we all left feeling as high as kites". He headed for home, starting the cycle ride back to his car. He was pedalling along at 30mph when disaster struck and he was hit by a lorry. Adrian found himself sprawled on the ground, surrounded by the two



halves of his bicycle. Amazingly, his main concern was that he would be out of the show, and in horror he rushed to check his important cycling bones - collarbone and wrists. He was relieved to find he was badly bruised but otherwise ok. He was still a long way from Richmond where his car was parked and, clutching the two fragments of his bike, he tried to hail a cab. Four taxis sailed by before a fifth stopped. Adrian explained he had no cash on him and the driver loaded him into the cab and took him on the half-hour journey for free. Adrian is still touched by this incredible act of kindness.

The day before the Opening Ceremony, Adrian was recovering at home. Just after lunch he found out that someone had leaked a 30-second video of the dress rehearsal to the media, including scenes with the dove bikes. At this point, a fragile Adrian hit rock bottom, and he openly admits he cried for the next couple of hours. "I couldn't believe the secret was out. It was bittersweet as although I was on the news riding a bike everything we had worked for and kept hidden was out there."

By Friday, the day of the ceremony, the doves had dusted themselves down and got back into the zone for their performance. Adrian said "in 24hrs I went from rock bottom to one of the most fantastic moments of my life, riding out into the stadium with the Arctic Monkeys playing live." The doves had never before had an audience and had been warned to brace themselves for the roar of the crowd. But as they emerged into the stadium "there was actually a deeper quiet than we had ever had during rehearsals. The spectators were seemingly stunned into silence - if the band had stopped playing you could have heard a pin drop."

The past six months of Adrian's life had led up to this moment, and all "Dove 28" had to do now was three things: maintain a steady 9mph speed, cross over with his opposing dove (who was circling in the opposite direction) at the exact centre point, and finish in the right place... all the while flapping his dove wings. A slight added challenge was the fact that the promised dotted line on the track, which all the cyclists had been trained to follow, had been covered in white ticker tape. Adrian completed his lap almost



perfectly and rode out of the stadium elated. He had delivered what 200 hours of practice had worked towards and survived a rollercoaster journey. Adrian ecstatically rode around afterwards for a further 30 minutes, flapping his wings until they were forcibly removed! The volunteers headed to the aftershow party to celebrate and later a rather worse for wear Adrian headed for the Tube.

On the train home Adrian couldn't resist telling the guard his story, and ended up getting a free first class journey with complimentary drinks. Since then Adrian has been busy telling his tale to "anyone who can't walk away", and has been sighted roaming the corridors of Hursley clutching various components of his dove outfit.

*Article supplied by Adrian Robinson*

## THE OTRA JUBILEE STREET PARTY



On Tuesday 5th June, Oakmount Triangle Residents held a Street party in honour of the Queen's Diamond Jubilee. They were blessed with perfect weather for the event and Leigh Road was crowded with tables adorned with flags and bunting in red, white and blue. There was something for all the family with games for the children, dancing for everyone and a quiz for

the adults: the Toast Rack Bus was kept busy well into the evening ferrying happy children around the neighbourhood. There was a BBQ and local ale and many party-goers also brought their own food and drink much of which was shared. It was a very enjoyable day and thanks should

be extended to Marieta Candal-Couto, who project managed, and her hardworking group of helpers without whom it would not have been such a success.

*Caroline Knight*



## JERRY'S PARTY

HRA Committee held a party to mark Jerry Gillen's retirement from the position of Chair of HRA. The party was held on Sunday 17th September in Jerry's house and garden. This was our second attempt as we called the first one off due to an adverse weather report, which turned out to be wrong! However, on the revised day we were blessed with blue skies and sunshine – a perfect day for a garden party. We had decided to make it American Supper style so all the guests contributed food and drinks. This kept the cost down for everyone and was extremely successful as there was a vast array of different dishes to try. The puddings were amazing and the plates were scraped clean by the end of the afternoon. Professor Roger Brown made a short speech thanking Jerry for the unstinting service he has given to HRA over 20 years on the committee many of which were as Chair.

At the AGM, Jerry had been presented with some gifts bought with generous donations from the committee, local residents and neighbouring residents' associations. He



received crystal wine glasses, garden vouchers and some credit to buy wine from his wine supplier.

As has been said earlier in this newsletter Jerry has not left the committee and we are all grateful that he is continuing to work hard on behalf of HRA.

*Caroline Knight*

## OTRA PLANT SALE

OTRA held their traditional plant sale and coffee morning in May. This year the money raised was donated to the Stroke Association in appreciation for the help that Ray Paull has received since he suffered a stroke on the day of the plant sale 2 years ago. Pam, Ray's wife, has been a generous contributor of plants for the sale since the event first started. The Bradshaws opened their house and garden for the sale and Nicky made her usual array of delicious cakes. There were donations of cakes and

plants from local residents too. There were a lot of different plants to choose from and Claire Price's cherry tomatoes proved to be prolific producers – the vines were eventually weighed down with fruit. Bob Sanderson produced a great variety of herbs which are always popular.

As well as a way of making some money (£378) it is also a good opportunity for neighbours, who sometimes just wave to each other in passing, to have a really good catch up.

*Caroline Knight*

## COMING TO A CINEMA VERY NEAR YOU?

Southampton has long had various suburban cinemas, offering residents a broad range of films, such as the Atherley in Shirley, and of course the Broadway in Portswood, a huge film venue by suburban standards both now in alternative use. However as well as the two big complexes in the city, and the wonderful Harbour Lights, in Highfield there is also a local functioning cinema, the Phoenix Film Society. Every Wednesday in term-time, from September through to June, in the cinema of the Students' Union building of the University of Southampton, the Phoenix screens the best in world cinema, and at prices so low, they have to be seen to be believed.

The Phoenix Film Society is actually the second oldest film society in Britain (after Edinburgh) and has been successfully resident on the University campus for almost 25 years. Our films are selected with care by our film selection committee, who have great knowledge and experience of films from around the world. Our aim is to show those films from around the globe that have gained critical acclaim both nationally and internationally. Very often films that have won major awards at festivals such as those in Cannes or Berlin are in our programme, but we have been known to search out less well-known movies worthy of a local screening. On occasion, we have been able to invite the director of a film down to talk about her or his work, and to engage in a Q and A session with our members.

We work in close association with Union Films, who offer an outstanding programme – we represent the world cinema strand to their more conventional mainstream offerings. With a reciprocal membership and ticketing arrangement, our members are able to see UF presentations, and between us we show more than 150 films a year.

We started our year with a Gala event at the end of

September with the screening of the Oscar-winning silent film 'The Artist'. In November, we have a local-interest presentation of 'Fezeka's Voice', about a South African high school choir's once-in-a-lifetime trip to the Salisbury International Festival, and the director, Holly Lubbock will be present at our screening.

Always a highlight of the Phoenix Autumn term programme is our Christmas film, which this year is a hilarious James Bond spoof comedy from France, 'O.S.S. 117 Cairo Nest of Spies', to be followed by a glass of wine and mince pies. In the Summer, members get the chance to vote for our gap week film, which, along with regular Newsletters, Weekly Film Notes, and social events, all make the Phoenix very much a community experience. This year we shall be screening 30 films, and yearly membership at £70 (£60 concessions) will give you access to all of these. This means seeing high-class films for just over £2.30, as compared with the commercial cinemas where a film showing will cost upwards of £7. Alternatively, if you only wish to see some of our movies, you can buy a one-off Associate membership for £2 and then buy your ticket for each film you wish to see at £5 (£4 Concessions).

We have a loyal membership, but are always looking to increase that number, so with the cinema on the doorstep of most of you who will be reading this article, what better way to spend a Wednesday evening than watching a great movie on the big screen, so close to home.

Details of our programme are available at our website [www.thephoenix.org.uk](http://www.thephoenix.org.uk) and our printed programme is available in most local libraries, at Harbour Lights, or by simple e-mail request to [enquiries@thephoenix.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@thephoenix.org.uk) We look forward to seeing you soon, at a cinema very near you!

*Graham Cole (Chairperson,  
The Phoenix Film Society, Southampton)*

### OFFERS FOR MEMBERS

<b>Ceno's Restaurant &amp; Wine Bar</b>	<b>8055 4400</b>
10% loyalty discount off food & drinks, when taken together (cannot be used in conjunction with any other offer)	
<b>Gandhi's Restaurant</b>	<b>8055 3121</b>
10% off food and drink, any day of the week	
<b>Kohinoor Indian Restaurant</b>	<b>8058 2770</b>
<b>Kuti's, Oxford Street</b>	<b>8022 1585</b>
<b>Noorani, Fair Oak</b>	<b>8060 1901</b>
<b>The Pier Thai Restaurant</b>	<b>8033 9211</b>
20% discount, on mid week, non anniversary days	
<b>Sara's Thai Cuisine, 273 Portswood Road</b>	<b>8067 6063</b>
10% off all meals, including Takeaway	
<b>Mango Thai Tapas</b>	<b>8067 9977</b>
10% on food.	
<b>Portswood Computers</b>	<b>8058 3001</b>
10% discount	
<b>Innervision</b>	<b>8055 5165</b>
10% discount	
<b>Highfield House Hotel</b>	<b>8055 4223</b>
10% off published prices	
<b>Lucy's Cakes</b>	<b>07796 953952</b>
10% off	

All the above offers are conditional upon production of a current HRA membership card at the time.

### COMMON SENSE

The Little Common was much changed last winter with clearance of a large amount of the vegetation at the southern end which restored the open views under the large trees from Oakmount. We are aiming to complete the work this winter with removal of some more holly, laurel and juvenile forest trees and will be treating the stumps left last year to prevent re-growth. This is being funded by the SCC community grant that we were successful in obtaining. The nettle, bramble and bindweed regrowth will be machine flailed again to encourage regrowth, in time, of grassy groundcover. We are also intending to strengthen the roadside bank - for which we have £500 from the University Community Fund.

#### The working party dates for 2012/13 are:

Sat 27 Oct	Wed 5 Dec	Sat 16 Feb
Wed 7 Nov	Wed 16 Jan	Wed 13 Mar
Sat 24 Nov	Sat 19 Jan	Sat 16 Mar
Wed 28 Nov	Wed 13 Feb	

Saturdays 10.00-13.00, Wednesdays 13.00-16.00, with safety briefings at the start of each session. Meet opposite end of Khartoum Road. Bring your own gloves, safety glasses, saws and loppers if you can, but there will also be some available. Hot/cold drinks and biscuits provided.

## THE URBANE FORAGER

For most people in the UK early forays into foraging begin with blackberries, those ubiquitous black beauties that spring up all over the place in late August. Sadly for most people, this is where it stops too and my mission is to change that fact.

I work in an office, hunched over a computer most days and consequently I insist on getting out of the office for a healthy walk in my lunch hour. After a fairly short period of time you run out of roads to go down and begin to explore footpaths, fields and other nooks and crannies. If you keep your eyes open, you begin to become more aware of changes according to the season.

As a family, we decided to make more of a go of the foraging and started by observing the various blossoms to help us identify the trees. We put them on a map so that we would not forget the locations. Plum trees seemed to be everywhere; then the cherry, apple and pear blossom revealed the vast amounts of potential for future picking. I decided to blog our activities to document our progress; this further engaged the children and made it simpler to pass on the information to other like-minded families.

It's summer as I write this and it's getting hotter and dryer (at last). More importantly, there is a harvest out in the city waiting to be picked and processed, so I am currently very busy during my free time. Plums need to be picked eaten or preserved. Nuts need to be collected (my daughter loves doing this) and squirreled away for the winter months, chutney needs to be cooked (my wife is Head Chef) and put into jars and wine needs to be bottled (no prizes for guessing who this duty falls to). Before you

know it blackberries will be all over the common and we will be there to pick them; after this pears and walnuts become available. Then, in the autumn, the vast crop of apples needs to be harvested and stored away for the winter months or turned into cider.

When I started my blog I needed

a suitable moniker, there were lots of urban foragers out there already but they were all interested in things that most people consider weeds; this didn't seem very accessible or even practical for people with young families. We mainly pick: plums, cherries, blackberries, pears, apples, hazelnuts, walnuts and chestnuts, they are easy to recognise and process. I chose to call myself the Urbane Forager - as soon as I thought of it I knew it was right - the extra "e" really did it for me and it distinguished me from the people living in the woods. It changed the meaning and created an immediate fun brand.

<http://theurbaneforager.blogspot.co.uk/>

<http://urbaneforager.btck.co.uk/>



## THE HAWTHORNS

Most of you will know of The Hawthorns at the lower end of The Common. Some of you will even remember its previous use as a zoo, when the shrieks of tropical wild animals could be heard as far afield as Khartoum Road. It has long since been a wildlife education centre – with an interactive wildlife room - for schools and the public. It also has the only public toilets on The Common – an essential adjunct to the nearby heavily used paddling pool/play area. The café has recently been refurbished and has a stunning setting with a conservatory and outside deck overlooking a wildlife pond surrounded by rushes. The unprepossessing appearance of the building from outside means the café really is a hidden gem. The Council is working on making the entrance more inviting. The café deserves to be as fully used as possible - indeed its commercial viability could well be essential to the long-term survival of the centre as a whole. So, if you have not yet visited, try calling in for a drink/snack. A brisk walk around The Common will offset the effect of the tempting cakes on offer. It is open every day, including Bank Holidays,



8am till 6pm, and also serves fresh sandwiches, pasta & salads, jacket potatoes, toasties, delicious desserts, ice creams and hot & cold drinks.

*Simon Hill*

## SARAH CLOVER

Sarah Clover, who has regularly been instructed to represent members of the HRA in legal matters, has recently joined Kings Chambers from No 5 Chambers. Kings Chambers, one of the country's leading sets of Chambers, has offices in Manchester, Birmingham and

Leeds. Sarah will continue to be clerked by Gary Smith who can be contacted by telephone on 0121 200 3572 or by email [gsmith@kingschambers.com](mailto:gsmith@kingschambers.com)





# Shake your baubles!

Christmas 2012 Ceno Style

Dining out this Christmas has never been so easy. Ceno is the perfect venue for your party - from a small group of friends, to entertaining your favourite clients, or a major office party. For the ideal winter night out with great festive food and drinks, all throughout December, call us now to experience Christmas, Ceno Style.

**ALL HRA MEMBERS RECEIVE AN ONGOING 10% DISCOUNT WHEN DINING OUT AT THE RESTAURANT MAKING EATING OUT AT CENO EVEN MORE DELICIOUS.**

Visit our website for more details [www.cenorestaurant.com](http://www.cenorestaurant.com)  
**FOR RESERVATIONS CALL 023 8055 4400**

119, Highfield Lane, Southampton, Hampshire, SO17 1AQ  
t. 023 8055 4400 e. [info@cenorestaurant.com](mailto:info@cenorestaurant.com)

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*Est. 1900*

## Supporting your local community



Whether you are buying, selling, letting or renting, contact Pearsons Estate Agents for specialist advice in the Highfield area

58 & 60 London Road  
Southampton, SO15 2AH

[www.pearsons.com](http://www.pearsons.com)

Tel: 023 8023 3288

### MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

I/We would like to join/renew membership of the Highfield Residents' Association and enclose the subscription of £3.00  
(One subscription covers all members of the household)

Name(s) of adults \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Postcode (please include) \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Tel No. \_\_\_\_\_

I enclose my membership fee of

and a voluntary donation of  Thank you!

This form, together with the subscription, should be sent to Membership Secretary, 5 Marlborough House, 2A Oakmount Ave, SO17 1BX (if by hand, before mid-day); or can be dropped into Highfield News; or can be brought to any HRA social event or meeting. Cheques should be made payable to Highfield Residents' Association. Please do not send cash through the post as it may get lost.

### CHRISTMAS PARTY APPLICATION

I wish to buy tickets as follows:

**Children's Christmas Party on 8th December.**

@ £5.00 for members' children

@ £7.00 for children of non-members

Name(s) and age(s) of child(ren) attending [children up to and including year 5]  
\_\_\_\_\_

I enclose cheque/cash for total of

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

Please send to Keith Reed, 21 Khartoum Road, Southampton SO17 1NY. Cheques should be made payable to Highfield Residents' Association. Please do not send cash through the post.

**Newsletter Team: Jerry Gillen and Caroline Knight. Assistance from David Bothwell and Stephen Ashfield. Contributions welcome. Please send to [thesecretary@highfieldresidents.co.uk](mailto:thesecretary@highfieldresidents.co.uk) in Microsoft Word format.**  
The views expressed in this newsletter are not necessarily the views of Highfield Residents' Association or its members.