

From: OWGRA info <info@owgra.org.uk>
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Dear OWGRA Members

1. COVID-19 VACCINATION PROGRAMME

We provided an update on the vaccination programme in the last e-newsletter (10 Jan) and it is progressing apace at the Thornbury Road surgery for the 7 GP practices in Brentford & Isleworth.

Some important points to note:

- You will be contacted for your vaccination when it's your turn.
- **Please don't phone your practice about the vaccination** as the lines are very busy.
- When you get a text message about the vaccine please answer it as instructed.
- Turn up no more than 10-15 mins before your appointment, as you might have to wait outside in the cold.
- Wear a short-sleeved top under a warm coat, so that you can easily free up an upper arm for the jab.
- Even when you have had the vaccine, you can still infect other people, so continue to take all the necessary precautions.

2. HELP SAVE LIVES IN HOUNSLOW – HOW TO BECOME A VOLUNTEER COVID-19 MARSHAL

In the last e-newsletter (10 Jan) we provided a link for volunteering as a marshal at the vaccination centres via St John Ambulance. You can also apply via this link https://ehcvs.org.uk/opportunity/covid-vaccination-marshall-12487/?utm_campaign=&utm_content=&utm_medium=email&utm_source=govdelivery&utm_term=

3. SURVEY ON COVID-19

Please take a few minutes to complete this survey from Hounslow Council who are trying to see how the residents of our borough have been affected by the pandemic. The closing date is Sun 31 Jan.

https://haveyoursay.hounslow.gov.uk/communications/covid-survey/?utm_campaign=&utm_content=&utm_medium=email&utm_source=govdelivery&utm_term=

4. REPORTING COVID-19 CONTRAVENTIONS

With the new more contagious variant of COVID-19 present in London it is now more important than ever that we all follow government guidelines. If you do come across blatant flouting of the guidelines you can report such incidents on <https://www.hounslow.gov.uk/xfp/form/311>

5. HOUNSLOW'S PROMISE CHARITY URGENTLY NEEDS OLD OR UNUSED COMPUTERS FOR SCHOOL PUPILS

Local education charity Hounslow's Promise is asking residents and businesses to donate computers, tablets, and laptops they no longer use to help disadvantaged school children to continue their education at home during lockdown.

The call follows research from the Hounslow Education Partnership with the charity showing over 1100 children are in need of a laptop or computer in Hounslow, and over 800 families also in need of broadband access to connect to the online school classroom. Even with additional laptops being promised by the Government for some pupils, many more will still be in need as parents work at home and libraries remain closed. Please see
<http://www.hounslowspromise.org/connectingkidshome.html>

If you have a device you would like to donate or wish to make a financial donation to the project, please email info@hounslowspromise.org.

6. CLAIMING BENEFITS FOR THE FIRST TIME

The Mulberry Centre (next to West Middlesex Hospital) is offering a series of virtual presentations on the various issues that have arisen during the pandemic for those people having to make claims for benefits, possibly for the first time. The seminars will run throughout January and February and are aimed at the unemployed, the employed (including those on furlough who may be concerned about their job after this scheme ends), the self-employed, pensioners and carers.

Places on the seminar are available by clicking on the following link:

<https://buytickets.at/themulberrycentre/r/email>

Chris Rees, Welfare & Benefits Lead at The Mulberry Centre, can also offer appointments to check claimants' entitlement and support their application for benefits. Please call the switchboard on 020 8321 6300 to book a time.

7. DISCARDED TESCO TROLLEYS

Since the start of the pandemic and the first lockdown we have seen a significant increase in discarded Tesco trolleys in our area. You can report them using the **Trolleywise** app which you can download onto your smartphone.

8. OUR LOCAL AREA – SURVEY ON LIKES & DISLIKES

Hounslow Council is seeking feedback about our local area, what makes it special, what we like and don't like about it and the activities that we undertake in the different parts of the borough. The feedback will help the Council to understand what contributes to an area's special character and how future improvements can enhance design quality and character.

The Council is seeking this feedback to inform a new Character and Design Study, which looks in depth at our built character and socio-economic context. The study will also introduce design codes, which set out rules for developers to ensure that new development enhances character.

Here is a link to the survey <https://hounslowcharacteranddesign.commonplace.is> which closes on Fri 5 Feb.

If this piece of work could influence what happens on the Tesco & Homebase sites that would be good, so please do complete the survey and tell the Council what you think.

9. HOUNSLOW MATTERS

Survey

The Council's magazine 'Hounslow Matters' is delivered to most homes in the borough 4 times a year. The Council is doing a survey on its design, content, length, etc, to make sure that it provides us with the information we want and need.

Here is the link to the survey which closes on 31 January

<https://haveyoursay.hounslow.gov.uk/communications/hounslowmatterssurvey/>

Hounslow Matters on-line

If you don't get the magazine delivered to your property you can always read it on-line – see
<https://www.hounslow.gov.uk/hounslowmatters>

In addition, there is a more frequent **Hounslow Matters Newsletter** that is sent by e-mail and contains lots of useful local information. Here is the latest edition (15 Jan)

<https://content.govdelivery.com/accounts/UKHOUNSLOW/bulletins/2b751ea>

There is also the very informative **COVID-19 Update** which is e-mailed once a week. Here is the latest one from 19 Jan <https://content.govdelivery.com/accounts/UKHOUNSLOW/bulletins/2b981f9>

Signing up to Hounslow bulletins

You can subscribe to all the Hounslow bulletins via this link and we highly recommend that you do so to stay informed

https://www.hounslow.gov.uk/getconnected?utm_campaign=&utm_content=&utm_medium=email&utm_source=govdelivery&utm_term=

10. WARREN FARM

Warren Farm is just north of Osterley in the borough of Ealing, along Windmill Lane after the M4 underpass, next to Long Wood. Some of you know the area and some of us have discovered it on our lockdown walks. It is a 61-acre urban meadow which has been successfully rewilded over the last 10 years and is now bursting with incredible plant species with astounding beneficial results for wildlife.

Warren Farm has a long and interesting history. It was a farm and was managed by the local St Bernard's Psychiatric Hospital until 1961, and then used for various sports for many years eg football, cricket, netball, tennis, shot-put and long jump. In 2009 Ealing Council stopped maintaining the site due to lack of funds. QPR Football Club expressed interest in the site and obtained planning permission to set up their training ground there. Local residents took the matter to Judicial Review and although they lost, QPR found an alternative site and pulled out.

Much of the fly-tipping which has scarred the area has been removed and Ealing litter pickers regularly clear the area. Tragically, this special green space is under threat of being lost forever to development unless urgent action is taken.

In September 2020, the Wildlife Trusts called on the government to create 'Wildbelt' land across urban areas of Britain – land specifically designated for nature recovery. Warren Farm Nature Reserve and the surrounding Brent River Park Meadows are already Wildbelt land. Warren Farm is home to thousands of species, many of them rare and red-listed. Skylarks, yarrow pugs, yellow necked mice, little owls, barn owls, wrynecks, ancient oak trees, rare clovers, slow-worms, toads and bats have all been recorded here.

There is a bold vision for Warren Farm. The forward-thinking Brent River & Canal Society (BRCS) has proposed that the green spaces surrounding Warren Farm should be brought together. Warren Farm Nature Reserve, Jubilee Meadow, Trumpers Field, Blackberry Corner and Fox Meadow would collectively form one large Local Nature Reserve, with Warren Farm at its centre.

For more information and to sign the petition urging Ealing Council and the Mayor of London, Sadiq Khan, to take action to ensure that Warren Farm Nature Reserve and surrounding Brent River Park Meadows obtain statutory Local Nature Reserve (LNR) designation, go to www.warrenfarmnaturereserve.co.uk

11. CRIME PREVENTION ADVICE

For practical tips on how to safeguard your property and keep burglars away during the long winter nights, please see attached leaflet.

12. ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR (ASB) – HOW TO RECOGNISE AND REPORT IT

We hear lots of reports of ASB which are not being reported to the police. Attached is a leaflet which explain what ASB includes (eg misuse of fireworks, nuisance neighbours, begging, street drinking, etc), how to recognise it and how to report it. The advice is to contact 999 if the ASB is taking place there and then, or call 101 after the event, or Crimestoppers on 0800 555111 to remain anonymous. In any case, PLEASE REPORT ASB TO THE POLICE so that they have a record of the incident.

Here are a few examples that we are asking the community to report on every time they happen.

We hear complaints about ASB outside the shops on Thornbury Road (north) and at the junction of Thornbury Road and Osterley Avenue (particularly when the hairdresser is open), but because the police get very few reports of any problems, they are unable to justify putting additional resources into patrolling that area.

During lockdown when the Goals Football Club (behind Oaklands Ave) is closed, we are getting reports that trespassers are frequently playing football there. The Goals staff are furloughed so there is no staff presence on the site, so every time trespassers arrive to play football during lockdown, please report the matter to the police.

13. TRAVELLERS

We recently had a traveller incursion on the Homebase site at Gillette Corner. They were only there for 2 days but managed to leave a pile of fly-tipped rubbish which the land owner is responsible for removing.

Do watch out for unlicensed companies offering to take your rubbish away at a cheap rate. If that happens you are liable and face a hefty fine. So always make sure that you check any company offering such services that they are a legal entity and licensed to conduct such activities.

14. TESCO & HOMEBASE

Last but not least, what is happening with the Tesco & Homebase planning applications? Responses are still being submitted to the Council Planners and we expect the applications to be considered by the Planning Committee in the spring. We will keep you posted.

If you haven't objected yet, you can still do so. See <https://www.thb.owgra.org.uk/how-to-object>

Kind regards

Barbara Stryjak
OWGRA (Osterley & Wyke Green Residents' Association)