



NEWSLETTER SPRING 2017

Ariston Site Update

A big “thank you” to everyone who contacted our local councillors and the press in December when we got the shock news, only a week ahead of the Cabinet meeting, that Herts County Council was going back on its previous decision in 2014, to support discussion with the District Council, to transfer the Lower Heath to them. They now propose to retain the Lower Heath as a potential primary school site.

We got great support from County Councillor Roma Mills and our three District Councillors (particularly Richard Curthoys) and good coverage from the Herts Advertiser – but predictably, the Cabinet accepted the officers’ recommendation – and the rest of the Harpenden Road site (the Ariston Site) is set to be marketed in the spring.

So – the fight goes on! FoBH committee feel very strongly that the whole community has campaigned for over fifteen years for the Lower Heath to be protected as a public open space with access for all. We were stunned to learn that the District Council got no more warning than we did about the County Council’s change of heart. We are pleased that the District Council still consider the 2002 Planning Brief to be the blueprint for the future of the Ariston Site and that the Lower Heath should be kept open “in perpetuity”.

We don’t believe that the Lower Heath is the right place for an additional primary school and it should not now be left in limbo with the threat of building on it hanging over us.

What happens next?

1. Do visit the website www.bernardsheath.org for further information and FAQs.
2. **Sign our on-line petition (more details and link from the website).**
3. Local elections take place in May. Please lobby prospective local councillors asking their support. Ave they ever even visited the Lower Heath?)

In the meantime, the temporary access road to Bridle Close has now been removed although the Lower Heath remains closed off by HCC next to the old fire station and near Heathlands School.

Beech Bottom Dyke

We held two clean up days in the Dyke, one to clear litter and overhanging branches from the top path, hoping to reduce the amount of winter mud, and the other to open up access along the bottom. As this is a Scheduled Ancient Monument, we may not lay paths or install hand rails nor in any way disturb the soil. See below for our next work session, to which Beech Road residents are especially welcome.

Sandridge Road Wastes

We hope shortly to finalise designs for two interpretation boards to be placed at either end of the Wastes.

The Water Tank

We have cleared undergrowth from the bottom but soil and rubble still remain. We plan to clear that this spring.

As the tank is unique to this area, it is hoped that it will be listed on the Historic Environment Record.

Dates for your diary

Action Day – Sunday 5 March from 09.30 to spring clean the Heath. Meet outside Heath House. We shall try to remove ivy from some of our mature trees, so if you have loppers or saws, they would be useful.

AGM - Saturday 25 March 10.30 in The Jolly Sailor. Come and join us to hear plans for next year and for a cup of coffee.

Beech Bottom Dyke litter pick – Sunday 23 April from 09.30. Meet on the grass opposite the Ancient Briton.

Our contact details

www.bernardsheath.org

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Subs are due (Jan-Dec 2017) at £10 per household. Please fill in the form and send a cheque to the treasurer, 21 Road Warwick Road, AL1 4DJ.

Name.....

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I enclose a cheque for £10 (payable to Friends of Bernards Heath)

Signed.....

An email receipt will be sent, or please tick the box below.

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