

Residents Spring 2024 Survey Results



Our appreciative thanks to all those residents who kindly responded to the recent Survey conducted on behalf of the Britannia Square Residents' Association (BSRA). The intention of this has been to open-up discussion amongst all residents of Britannia Square, Albany and Stephenson Terraces, with the aim to better gauge engagement (and indifference) and understand the community needs and wishes of all of us living in the neighbourhood, and hopefully encourage more community involvement. Also, it should help us establish where we are going forward as an association and not just to rely on what has worked in the past. The dynamics of the neighbourhood are constantly evolving and we need to respond in a way which is as relevant as possible.

At the time of writing, of the 102 occupied households included within the survey – we have received just 35 responses from a little more than a third (34%) of all households. It's a pity we haven't received a greater response, but perhaps that is indicative of the changing demographic needs of residents with other prioritised commitments – rather than indifference as a reason.

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Most respondents are our seasoned supporters, but it is pleasing to hear from several new households with some inspired ideas and initiatives, thank you!

In summary, the feedback from the survey suggests:

1. In addressing Event ideas: General opinion considered that the annual events BSRA currently schedule as about right – however it is evident that attendance at some regular events is generally decreasing each year (with the exception of the Wine Club!) suggesting we may well have to re-think continuing with some events and introduce more relevant ideas appealing more to the ages and shared interests of our current neighbourhood.

Most popular amongst the answers were a sociable coffee morning; to reinstate a daytime book club & book swap; family friendly summer BBQ/supper; and quiz. A rounders match was also suggested as perhaps more inclusive (rather than reinstating the former father & son cricket match, a big hit in previous years but we no longer have access to a large enough ground.) Lots of other inspired initiatives include a “Lovely Front Garden” / “Open Gardens” fundraiser day ; annual prize for best seasonal front door wreath; children’s Easter egg/treasure hunt; a film club; outings to “event cinema” at the local Odeon; music/instrumental group; themed dance class; a lecture series; local cultural outings; group dog walking; group trip to Worcester races.

2. In addressing other Community ideas – Opinion being that the initiatives that we currently support are relevant and appreciated. What brings communities together is policing, clean streets and planning issues – each of which we do already address with our Neighbourhood Watch scheme, annual street clean, and highlighting planning applications. Other suggestions include thoughts to encourage closer relationships with nearby Residents’ Associations, e.g. York Place and St George’s Square. So, any of your collaborative ideas will be welcome...

3. In addressing how the BSRA can improve – It is pleasing to note how many residents are appreciative of current Association efforts, and their needs being met. The WhatsApp group is especially applauded for being helpful, and responsive to sharing information. Other suggestions include a “Skills Swap” and equipment loaning; a “Community Noticeboard” to capture interest and also to benefit those not active on either WhatsApp or email. And suggestion of a “Forum” to encourage open discussion and more timely response and feedback to topical neighbourhood issues eg Residents’ parking, tackling sustainable Eco issues living in listed homes in a Conservation Area - either on the BSRA website or subject matter for a regular coffee morning?

Thank you to all those who have offered their willingness to help organise and support where and how they can. BUT... little else can be instigated without active volunteers to get YOUR ideas off the ground, and essentially there is need for more support, involvement and participation from neighbours. *If we can please ask for proactive organisers and enthusiastic helpers to come forth... and those others to participate where possible!*

To discuss arranging an event, please contact either myself, or any other member of the committee in the first instance. Details on page 8.

Thank you.

Miss Ella Blankstone, (Membership Secretary)
The Old Coach House BS, ellablankstone@talktalk.net 07951 460070

Forthcoming Events

STREET SPRING CLEAN

Albany Terrace & Britannia Square – Sunday, 12th May 2024 from 3pm to 5pm



The City Council has agreed to help us again with a Street Spring Clean on Sunday 12th May and Monday 13th May. All residents will be given an official notification by the Council and parking permit(s) for free use of the Pitchcroft and Croft Road Council car parks from 1pm on Sunday 12th May until 7am on Tuesday 14th May.

Residents are asked to ensure their vehicles are moved away from Albany Terrace and Britannia Square by 3pm on Sunday when they are all invited to clear weeds and litter from the pavements and kerbsides near their properties.

The Council will send street sweeping teams in on Monday morning to remove everything we have gathered up. It is intended that the gully cleaning machines will also take advantage of the clear access.

Residents are free to bring their vehicles back after 3pm on Monday 13th May. The Council will provide cones to deter parking in the 3-hour non-resident bays and will display warning notices in advance throughout the area.

Tools and equipment for those without their own will be provided by the Council from 3pm on Sunday 12th May at the United Reformed Church Hall, Albany Terrace.

More details about this year's Spring Clean, along with features about activity in previous years can be found at www.britanniasquare.org [here](#)

BSRA Committee

SUMMER PARTY

Sunday, 9th June 2024 from 12 noon

Please save the date for our summer event which will be held in the grounds of RGS Springfield.

Further details will be circulated to all households nearer the date and published on the website at www.britanniasquare.org [here](#).

BSRA Committee



Britannia Square Residents' Association Newsletter – Spring, 2024



Neighbourhood Watch

Garden security

Sadly our area is a favoured target for those looking for easy pickings from gardens and already one incident has been reported this year – the theft of an umbrella stand from a front door step. So with summer approaching, here's a timely reminder about garden security...

Protect gardens from theft

If you are out all day in the garden, it is tempting to leave tools, furniture, bikes and other valuables out, either for use again the next day, or while you pop out for more supplies. But leaving them out makes them prime targets for thieves, so it is important that you put these items away. Also keep sheds and garages locked.

Install outdoor lights

One of the biggest deterrents for thieves is motion-sensitive security lights. They draw attention to your home and put thieves off from targeting it. Making it 'noisy' to enter your garden can also discourage would-be thieves, so putting gravel down can help. Having high fences, walls and hedges to make entering your garden more difficult is also a good idea.

Secure free-standing items to the ground, fence or wall

While ideally, all valuable items would be put away to prevent theft, sometimes this is simply not practical. For bigger items which cannot easily be stored, think about anchoring them to the ground. Garden furniture thefts accounts for the majority of garden thefts, so prevent it by using wall or floor anchors.

It is also a good idea to secure things like trampolines, water features, bird tables, and valuable plants, hanging baskets and potted trees and shrubs. By anchoring them with wires, or setting in concrete, it makes it almost impossible for thieves to take them away.

Leave a fingerprint

It is a good idea to mark all your valuables. Not only does it make them identifiable, which can help with the recovery, if they are stolen you've made it clear to thieves that your items are marked. They may appear less appealing and potentially less valuable, so not worth taking.

Don't make it obvious when you're away

If you are away, try and get someone to pop over every now and again to water your plants, put your rubbish out on the right day - perhaps even mow your lawn – so it will look like you are still around.

Gull Report – Spring 2024

As previously reported, the gull control measures carried out over the last few years by Worcester City Council have resulted in a significant reduction in gulls causing problems in our area. New residents may not be aware of how many problems we used to have with gulls nesting on our roofs and causing significant distress and discomfort to residents.

As you may have seen in the local press, Worcester City Council has announced that the Gull Control Budget for the financial year 2024-5 has been halved as part of the austerity measures that the Council is being forced to make to balance its budget. They have therefore decided to modify the Gull Control measures for the forthcoming year.



1. There will be no “hawking” this year . It has been concluded that it is not cost effective.
2. The Council will continue to carry out egg and nest removal from affected properties, using cherry picker platforms to access the nests. The cost of this will be picked up by the Council
3. While access to the nest site is created by the egg and nest removal process, the Council will carry out “nest proofing” by fitting mesh cages over chimney stacks, bird guards on individual chimney pots and caterpillar spikes in gutters etc. This activity will be offered to property owners on a shared cost basis – the Council will cover the access costs and the home owners will pay the cost for the fixtures and fittings required. Indicative prices are:- Mesh Cage over chimney stack - £240, Mesh Cage with spikes - £300, Bird guards in individual chimney pots - £16 each, Caterpillar spikes (900mm long) - £60 each. This is still a considerable cost saving for the resident as gaining access is the most expensive part of the work.

All of the known problem nest areas in our area, mainly around our tall chimneys, have been protected with mesh cages and other proofing measures in previous years, thereby preventing the birds from building their nests.

As a result of this new strategy, the Residents’ Association will not be asked to make a contribution to the programme this forthcoming financial year.

However it is essential that we remain vigilant or else the gulls may try to “recolonise” our area and we’ll be back to square one! So please keep your eyes open for gulls trying to nest on your roof, or causing any nuisance, and contact the Gull Control Officer Gordon Dugan by email to gordon.dugan@worscsregservices.gov.uk or by phone to 07917 592887. Please note that Gordon only works Part Time, so he may not respond for a few days.

Thank you for your continuing support

John Ball, BSRA Committee member

More information about Gull Control may be found at the Worcestershire Regulatory Services website [here](#).

BSRA Membership Report

Spring 2024

With regard to Membership, we currently have of the 118 Households: 55 Lifetime Members (47%) 3 Annual Members (3%), 10 “lapsed” annual members (8%) – and 50 households (42%) that have never been Members.

In many ways joining as a Member is a symbolic gesture whereby the resident acknowledges the aims of the Association. Like many similar organisations, benefits are not always tangible. The Membership subs help pay for the website, venue hire, leaflet printing etc. Membership of the Association essentially provides a platform to voice and add clout to all our community concerns and interests – and should include more of all residents’ suggested ideas and initiatives, which would be very much welcomed - so please use it, don’t lose it!

Another benefit of membership is our corporate membership of Worcester Civic Society which entitles BSRA Members to attend talks at the members' admission rate (when a charge is made). Some meetings have been publicised via “B-SquOSH” WhatsApp group, and previous newsletters, but only a few people have ever taken advantage of this perk. Details of Civic Society events can be found at [Worcester Civic Society : A Vision for Worcester](#)

If you are not already familiar with the interesting content of the Association website, we urge you to visit www.britanniasquare.org – as it has become a very comprehensive resource of neighbourhood matters, which also highlights the reciprocal benefits to us all today, and importance in safeguarding support ongoing into the future.

Interestingly, since its mention in the survey, we can report an increase in new visitor numbers to the website over the past month, to around 70 (a 30% increase on the previous month) – so that’s encouraging to know the message is getting across!

So, by way of contribution and in support of joining as members of the Association (without need to have to actively participate), please contact either myself, or any other member of the committee in the first instance.

Thank you.

Miss Ella Blankstone
(Membership Secretary)
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Committee members' work once again recognised by City Council

Carol Inman, BSRA Secretary, represented the Committee at the "Volunteer Celebration" event, held at Worcester Guildhall on Tuesday, 19th March. This annual event is hosted by Worcester City Council's Community Engagement Team as a "Thank you" for volunteers from all sorts of community groups, across the City.



The evening gave volunteers the opportunity to meet together and enjoy a light buffet supper with music provided by Emerald Strings. The evening was compered by Nina Das Gupta from BBC Radio H&W and presentations were given by local volunteers including representatives of the Arboretum Residents' Association and Friends of Laugherne Brook.

Planning Applications (changes since last Newsletter)

Date of application	Address	Proposal	Status
2023			
May	8 Albany Terrace	Listed building consent for the removal of an internal wall in the entrance hallway.	Approved
July	15 Britannia Square	Listed building consent for alterations involving internal dry-lining and general refurbishment.	Approved
November	45A Britannia Square	Proposed change of use of a house (use class C3) to a doctor's surgery (use class E)	Consultation ended. Pending decision.
December	43 Britannia Square	Erection of steel gates to existing driveway pillars.	Approved
December	22 Britannia Square	Install fencing trellis on existing fence panels at the rear of the garden	Withdrawn
December	42 Britannia Square	Installation of metal gates	Approved

BSRA tries to comment on all applications, when consulted. However, residents should comment directly on the City Council's planning website, if they would like to raise concerns or support any application.

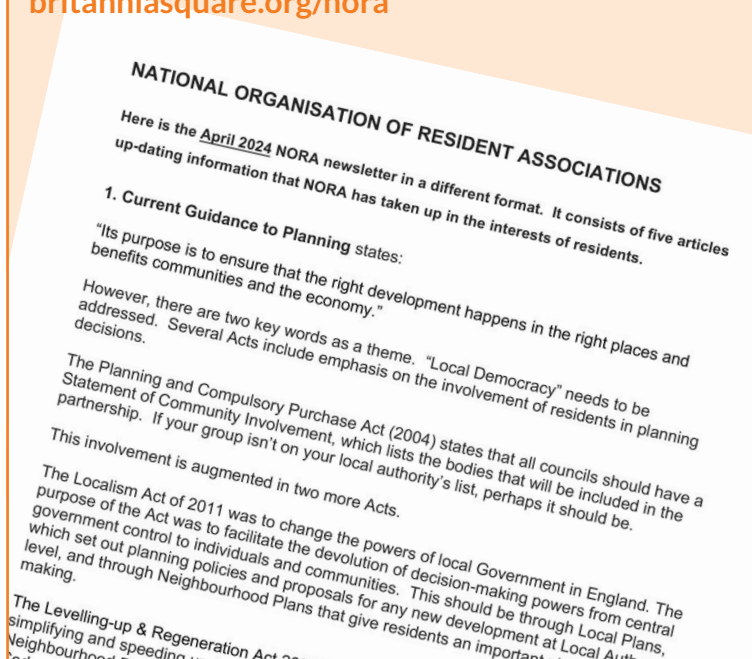
www.worcester.gov.uk/planning/planning-application-search

NORA Britannia Square Residents' Association is a member of NORA, the National Organisation of Residents' Associations. NORA was founded in 2003 by a group of town centre residents' associations who were concerned about the local threat to their environment and needed advice on issues such as:

- Planning • Licensing • Traffic management
- Car parking • Community safety.

Newsletters received from NORA are available to view on BSRA's website. These cover a range of topical issues including planning reform and parking legislation.

britanniasquare.org/nora



Paid-up Member?

Of the 118 households in Britannia Square, Albany Terrace and Stephenson Terrace, 58 are current paid up members.

Life membership is £30 per household and annual membership is £5 per household. Payment of membership automatically includes your household as a member of our Neighbourhood Watch Scheme, which may enable you to claim a discount on your household insurance.

Joining the Association helps us to protect our local environment, to develop initiatives to improve our area and helps us to access local authority assistance and resources on your behalf.

To join the Association please contact Membership Secretary, Miss Ella Blankstone
ellablankstone@talktalk.net



BSRA Committee Current Members

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