

# CIVITAS TOTTENHAM

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE TOTTENHAM CIVIC SOCIETY

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

## Building for the Future Matthew Bradby

It was with shock and dismay that many of our members first realised the extent of the damage caused by the riots on Tottenham High Road a few weeks ago. Both the fact of the riots themselves, the social divisions they highlighted, and the destruction that they caused, were profoundly upsetting. For some they represented the loss of their homes and workplaces.

After the initial shock had subsided, what was most impressive was the quick and resolute way in which many people in Tottenham began to plan for the future. People began to discuss and organise in a positive and practical way. There was little defeatism or despondency. 'Wartime spirit' may be a bit of a cliché, but it was there to be seen on the streets, at meetings, and in people's words.

Nevertheless we have to recognise that there are some profound divisions in society (throughout London and beyond) – something that we had alluded to in 'Civitas' only a few months ago. These divisions are worrying in the extreme. Their origins are also both complex

and controversial, and go beyond the remit of Tottenham Civic Society.

The main mission of the Society is to promote high standards of architecture and planning, to educate, to preserve our heritage, but also to improve quality of life and promote sustainable regeneration. So from many angles we should be involved with efforts to rebuild, both physically, but also socially and educationally.

We need to develop our ideas about how the High Road should be restored. Should we argue for faithful reconstructions of the buildings that have been lost? Is this a better guarantor of high quality architecture than something completely new? What is the risk that sites might lie empty for years, in the current economic climate?

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*A view of the LCS building before the riots*

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The Georgian Group, the national pressure group that campaigns for the preservation of Georgian architecture, would like to see 530-536 High Road rebuilt – as close as possible to what existed until it was torched this summer. The original terrace at the back dated from the 1820s, but there was a row of late 19<sup>th</sup> C shops extending to the front. Still, it was a balanced

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and tasteful extension and a testament to the High Road's long commercial prosperity.

The Carpet Right shop, and the flats above it, originally built by the London Co-operative Society in 1930 was one of the grandest and most striking buildings on the High Road. Its white dome dazzled in the sun, framed by dark cedars in the view from the south, it had an exotic quality. The scenes of it burning, and the subsequent blackened skeleton of twisted steel girders, were some of the defining and heartbreaking images of the London riots. The site is now cleared, its future uncertain.

On a more positive note, to help prove what we said in the second paragraph, it appears more likely that Tottenham Hotspur FC will stay at their historic home in the High Road. Hopefully this will serve as an engine of regeneration and help to pull the suburb out of the dire straits in which, to the view of many outsiders, it now flounders.

Tottenham Civic Society members, individually and collectively, will have an important role to play in the coming months and years.

## TCS Civic Day

In June TCS held the first ever Civic Day celebration. There were tours of the newly-restored Tottenham Town Hall along performances given by the New Tottenham Singers (see below)



## Ward's Corner

At 11.30 pm on 20th July, Haringey Council's special planning subcommittee refused the application by developer Grainger PLC to demolish the block at Wards Corner.

12 speakers representing traders, residents and local groups skilfully dismantled the arguments supporting the plan and demonstrated to the committee the clear reasons for rejecting the Grainger application. Doubt was cast over the Council's poor attempt at an Equalities Impact Assessment which failed to actually consult any of the people affected and as a consequence addressed none of the negative impacts that would arise from the scheme.

The decision to reject the plan was based predominantly on the grounds that the supposed regeneration benefits resulting from Grainger's scheme would not outweigh the loss that would be caused by the demolition: a tacit acceptance by the council of the strength of the community on the site and the real viability of their proposals to achieve the improvements to the area everyone wants to see.

What lies before us is no longer a never-ending series of legal battles and policy challenges. Instead, a place where we can create the futures we want to see for ourselves and our communities. There is more work to do now than ever before but the balance is shifting in our favour. The name Wards Corner is resonating in the ears of developers, councils and campaigns across the country, but the onus is on us to utilise this opportunity to show that together we can realise the many varied aspirations of this community.

We will be continue to develop ways to involve the entire community in the plan for the site in collaboration with various organisations and the council to ensure Wards Corner is developed in line with the aspirations of the community.

Get involved and come to one of our weekly meetings every Monday at 7pm, Garden House Restaurant, 410 High Rd, Tottenham.

Website [www.wardscornercommunity.org.uk](http://www.wardscornercommunity.org.uk)

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## First impressions of Tottenham Sue Rowe

It seemed there was a conspiracy to make me feel I'd made a major mistake, moving back to London after thirty years in Australia. I was greeted with, 'Welcome to the Land of Depression,' quickly followed by, 'Whatever made you come back here?' - a question I continued to hear on a daily basis as I searched for temporary accommodation. Now, since the riots of August 6th, more pointed questions arise. Why invest my life savings in a home in Tottenham? What chance is there of enjoying life here?

Jumping on that last question, oh there are thousands of chances of enjoying life here. Just the few I have met so far tell me that. Looters, muggers and torchers of buildings are not in the majority by a long chalk. Tottenham - fantastically multi-cultural like Darwin, where I spent the past seventeen years - isn't reverberating with praise, condoning the rioters' actions. I mostly see what you would expect after such violence: confusion, fear, anger, recrimination, disgust, shock, cynicism, bitterness, sorrow - and care.

First impressions? That Tottenham supports a proliferation of less-than-caring landlords, and has suffered some breathtakingly short-sighted town planning decisions hits any newcomer in the face. It's hard to find any street, commercial or residential, where potentially lovely period buildings aren't degraded and devalued by the eye offending evidence of social dysfunction, investors' meanness, or the council's circumlocution. Something to work on, for sure. But my family lived here when I was small, and I grew up a few miles down the road. What's bad about Tottenham was already a given. It's the upside which was a surprise.



*Sue outside her Dad's old shop*

I loved the High Road's cafes, hairdressers, and array of small shops, when I first arrived. I marvelled at the experience of 'proper shopping' with very-much-alive staff, and corner-shop-type proprietors trading in sideroads, still - an extinct species in Australia. Suddenly I realise, in the aftermath of the rampage, I appreciated many other shops and businesses too, and I weep for those who won't bounce back. (Barring the bookies, that is. I wish they would disappear for ever.)

Lovely buildings and shopping aside, however, Tottenham's greatest asset, lies in the high number of families rooted here. There are real families everywhere, the best indicator of a stable society, and hopefully there will now be a re-think of how best to meet the community's needs. Unlike many other parts of London, people can get a start in Tottenham. I was certainly glad - before the riots - that I could probably buy a home here at a reasonable price. Which returns me to an earlier question: Will I invest my life savings in Tottenham now? In a word, yes.

I don't believe an adequate explanation for the street terrorism which began here can be produced. People had to watch their homes burn, with everything they possessed. Livelihoods have been lost, years of hard work destroyed. Yet I believe a great many will refuse to give up on the Tottenham I first re-encountered eleven weeks ago: A vibrant Tottenham with a completely unique mix of cultures at its heart. There are still endless possibilities for the future. Historically never for the faint-hearted, I believe Tottenham will prove resilient yet again, with folk from many walks of life seeing the challenge as worthwhile, and rising up with a common purpose to make this a new beginning.

*Thanks, Sue, for such a positive article.*

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## TCS Events

### Architectural walk around Tottenham Green conservation area (this is a TCS/Open House event)

11.00am Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> September

Tour leaders: Matthew Bradby, Chair of Tottenham Civic Society, and others

External historical guided tour around the buildings of Tottenham Green, including C18 Georgian houses, C19 Jewish Hospital, Prince of Wales Hospital and Holy Trinity Church, ancient High Cross Monument, old Swan pub, Edwardian Town Hall complex, recent housing developments, new Bernie Grant Arts Centre and recent Banksy mural. In this small area there are 17 national listed buildings and over 50 locally listed buildings. Tour will last up to two hours with optional visit afterwards to Garden House Turkish restaurant for refreshments.

**Meet:** outside Old Tottenham Town Hall, Town Hall Approach Road, N15 4RY. Nearest tube is Seven Sisters, numerous buses along the High Road.

### Tour of St Ann's Conservation Area

11.00am Saturday 1<sup>st</sup> October

Tour leader: Joyce Rosser

A tour of this small and little known conservation area which includes the nationally listed St Ann's Church, Fowler Newsom Hall and some mid C19th model cottages. Chestnuts Park is within the conservation area. We will see the handsome Chestnuts Primary School (formerly Woodlands Park Primary School), the Sheikh Nazim Sufi Centre (formerly St Mary's Priory), the Police Station and many other attractive buildings and features, including a skeleton horse sculpture.

The tour will have a particular interest in St Ann's Hospital (the wall and northern buildings are within the conservation area) which is due to be redeveloped. Two of the hospital buildings are locally listed, the wall and some other buildings are seen as making a 'positive contribution' to the conservation area and there are tree protection orders on some trees within the hospital grounds.

**Meet:** outside Chestnuts Primary School, Black Boy Lane, N15

### Tour of Hale Village

11am Sunday 16<sup>th</sup> October

There will be a presentation about the development and a tour to include a show apartment, the marketing suite, Emily Bowes student accommodation block and the Combined Heat and Power plant.

Please note that there are a limited number of places on this tour. To book email [jrosser@lineone.net](mailto:jrosser@lineone.net) or phone 020 8347 7684 [www.tottenhamcivicsociety.org.uk](http://www.tottenhamcivicsociety.org.uk)

## Events organised by other groups

### Ally Pally Organ

Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> September at 7.30 p.m.

The next recital on the Palace organ will be given by Carl Jackson Director of Music at Her Majesty's Chapel Royal, Hampton Court Palace. Music by Elgar, Parry, Howells, Liszt and Alain Admission £7.00

### History Talk on Harringay

15<sup>th</sup> Sept

7pm - 8.30pm

South Harringay Junior School

Mattison Road N4

John Hinshelwood will be giving a talk on Harringay based on his new book *How Harringay Happened*. This will be followed two days later with a guided walk/ All part of the Harringay Food Festival(see below for further details).

<http://www.harringayfoodfestival.com/features.htm>

### Come and Celebrate Tottenham with Us! Bernie Grant Arts Centre

Saturday 17 September, 1pm - 5pm

The Great Book of Tottenham Project has been a spectacular year-long study of Tottenham and its people.

Join us to celebrate everything that is positive about the area. We will be unveiling dozens of huge photographic portraits of Tottenham folk, plus artworks in many media by more than 15 local artists.

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The day will feature:

An interactive version of the Great Book on touch-screen display  
Great Book photographs projected onto our huge screen  
Live music from top jazz trumpeter Byron Wallen, the 'Twilight Jaguar'  
A new sculpture garden for the BGAC  
Poetry performances and visual arts  
Film screenings and photographic displays  
Barbecue, cafe and bar  
VIP Guests and speakers TBC

## Latin American Festival

17th September

Bernie Grant Arts Centre, Town Hall Approach Road, N15

The Latino community, making up the growing North London Latino quarter who work in and around the covered market at Wards Corner, are so pleased at the recent Planning outcome about Wards Corner they have decided to thank the community with a festival day.

It will be held on the 17th September at the BG Arts Centre. There will be Latin American films, music and dance. Outside there will be stalls including some food stalls.

[www.berniegrantcentre.co.uk](http://www.berniegrantcentre.co.uk)

## Bruce Castle Museum

Lordship Lane, N17

Open House Weekend 17<sup>th</sup> & 18<sup>th</sup> September

Museum tours begin at 1.30pm on both days. Tours take place every half an hour. Last tour of the day is at 3.45pm. Doors open at 1.00pm and close at 5.00pm

In addition to the Museum's tours, there will be: Hawk!

Saturday 17th September 1-5pm

Live Birds of Prey outside the Tudor Tower. A welcome return to these popular hunting birds. See them up close and personal.

Sunday 18th September

All Hallows Church

The doors to nearby All Hallows Church will be open from 3-5p.m. All Hallows is well worth a visit to see the stained glass windows, the mosaic depictions of religious scenes and the memorials to local families on the walls.

Phone: 0208 808 8772 for more details.

## Markfield Beam Engine Museum

Saturday 17th and Sunday 18th September

Open 11:00 am

Engine Steaming 1:00pm to 2:30pm

3.00pm to 5:00pm

Admission Free

Markfield Road

South Tottenham

London N15 4RB

Tel 01707 873628

<http://myweb.tiscali.co.uk/gocaherts/index.htm>



## Harringay Food Festival

This very successful event is being held on 18th September this year from 12 noon in Green lanes. It will stretch from St Ann's Road to the South Harringay railway bridge and will feature food, information stalls, children's activities, music and entertainment

<http://www.harringayfoodfestival.com/features.htm>

## Tours of Restored Tottenham Town Hall

1pm-5pm Sunday 18th September

Hourly architect-led tours of this wonderful building. If you haven't been inside make sure you don't miss this opportunity.

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



*Mosaic flooring detail*

## Phoenix Cinema Free Screening

Sunday 18th September at 2pm

Whether you're an authority on film history or know nothing at all, come along to The Phoenix to see a free screening of early 20th Century films showcasing Barnet as the birthplace of British cinema, including the work of Acres, Paul and British & Colonial. The films will be introduced by Phoenix trustee and film historian Gerry Turvey and the screening will be followed by a discussion with Gerry Turvey and fellow film historian Ian Christie.

Booking is essential, so call the Box Office to reserve your seat today at this **free** screening on 020 8444 6789. For more information visit <http://www.phoenixcinema.co.uk/education/heritage/from-the-archives/>

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Phoenix Cinema  
52 High Road  
East Finchley  
N2 9PJ  
Tube: East Finchley (Northern line)  
Buses: 102, 143, 234, 263, 603, H3.

## Sporticultural Day

### Lordship Rec

Saturday 24th September 1pm-5pm

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

For the last few years we have held a community festival in Lordship Rec. This year, due to the extensive regeneration works in the Rec – which will be completed by July 2012 – we are down-sizing the festival and holding it in the Broadwater Centre and its grounds. We will be focusing on SPORTS and HORTICULTURE. Why not come and join in!

**SPORTS** Come and try out a range of activities for all ages and abilities – organised by Haringey Leisure Services

**FLOWER AND PRODUCE SHOW** The annual Tottenham Flower and Produce Show, organised by Back2Earth, provides a fantastic showcase for all locally grown fruit, vegetables and flowers plus home-cooked food and handicrafts. Entry is free to all but you will need an entry form in advance which can be obtained by emailing [info@back2earth.org.uk](mailto:info@back2earth.org.uk) or ringing the office on 0208 808 1829. Return the form to Back2Earth c/o Broadwater Centre, 1 Adams Road, N17 6HE

Refreshments, and information stalls.

## Ferry Lane Fun Day

Sunday 25<sup>th</sup> September  
2-5pm

Ferry Lane Community and Sports Ground Activities, stalls, face-painting and sports will help make this a fun-filled afternoon. If you can volunteer some help, want to have a stall, can lend a gazebo or find out more details then contact: [info@akarts.co.uk](mailto:info@akarts.co.uk)

## Haringey Independent Cinema

Thursday 29<sup>th</sup> September  
West Green Learning Centre  
West Green Road N15 (next to Downhills Park)

This month's event is presented jointly with the Tottenham Palestine Literature Festival ([www.totpallitfest.org.uk](http://www.totpallitfest.org.uk)) being organised by Haringey Justice for Palestinians. As part of the festival there will be some snacks and drinks at the start of the event from 6.30pm. There will also be exhibitions about Palestine on the night. So, please come early and join us. We are then showing the much acclaimed *The Promise*, a brilliant piece of cinema.

Afterwards, Professor Haim Bresheeth, Chair of Media and Cultural Studies, University of East London will be speaking about *The Promise* in the context of film and Palestine and the role of film within resistance movements.

The film starts at 7.15pm and it's £3 to get in or £2 concessions. For details of us, future films, or how to get to the venue check us out at: [www.haringey.org.uk/hic](http://www.haringey.org.uk/hic).

Coming soon:

Thursday 20th October, 7pm

*Stepping Razor Red X* The Peter Tosh story showing as part of Haringey Black History Month

Next presentations:

Thursday 24th November

Thursday 15th December

## Bruce Castle Park's Old Oak Tree

Readers will probably have seen for themselves or have heard about the gigantic branch which ripped away from the main trunk recently. It has now been cut away completely and the trunk treated to avoid infection to the tree's interior.

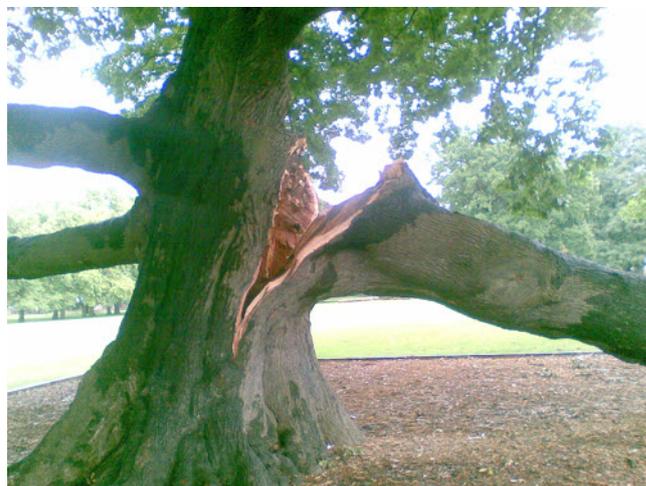


Photo: Courtesy of Robert Waite, Deputy Curator of Bruce Castle Museum

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## St Benet Fink Church Visit David Allen

Wednesday July 27, TCS members and friends gathered at St Benet Fink church, Walpole Road, on an arranged visit by Bruce Castle Museum, to hear Fr. James Hill talk about the church, its name and its history. I had thought St Benet Fink was a particularly obscure saint. Actually no such person existed! The 'Benet' in question is simply a once-common contraction of 'Benedict'—THE Saint Benedict of Nursia, patron saint of Europe and students, and famous for his Benedictine Rule of monasticism. Visitors can see a life-size, painted wooden statue of St Benedict carved expressly for this church on display. (It is apparently much-coveted by Benedictine houses far and wide). And 'Fink'? Well, it seems that in medieval times, the City of London was stuffed so full of churches that they ran out of popular saints after whom to name them. So, where churches shared the same

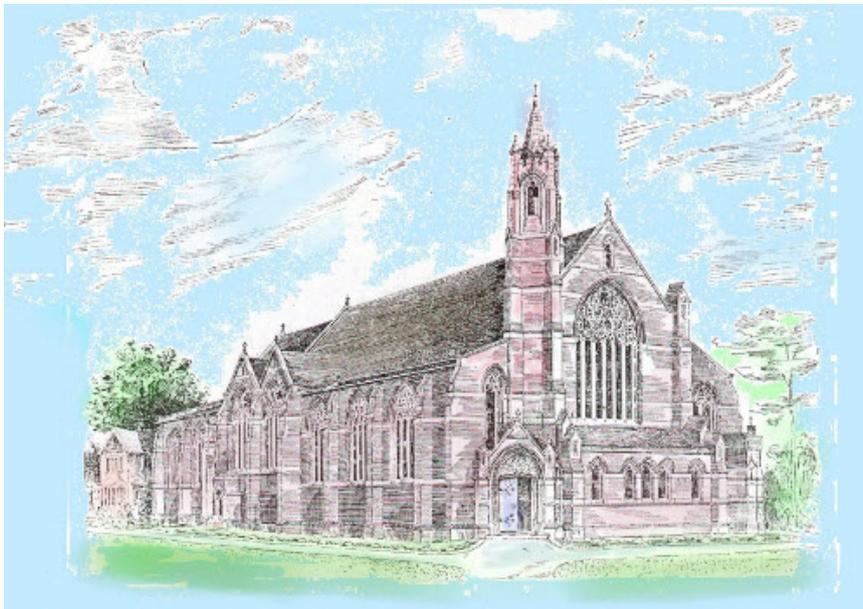
saint, some addition was made to the name in order to distinguish (e.g.) this St Benet from the other 2 in the City at that time. Our 'Fink' was a wealthy local church patron, Robert Finch the Elder.

Tottenham's St Benet Fink Church is therefore a successor church of a medieval foundation in the City of London. That church, like so many others, was destroyed in the Great Fire, to be replaced by a Wren design, an image of which is on display near the entrance of today's church. That church, in turn, fell victim to City improvements: reduced in size in 1842, the remnant was finished off in 1846, along with 2

other City churches, St Bartholomew-by-the-Exchange and St Peter Le Poer. All 3 churches were later to be refounded in north London suburbs: St Benet's at Tottenham, St Bart's at Stamford Hill and St Peter's at Friern Barnet. The new parish of St Benet Fink was created to serve the rapidly growing population in the area (especially the Tower Gardens estate, built in stages between 1904 and 1928) and was carved from the already large parish of St Mark's, Noel Park and the ancient parish of All Hallows, Tottenham.

Our Anglo-Catholic church of St Benet Fink and its vicarage (1911/12), were designed by JS Alder, better-known for his non-conformist

churches, including Dukes Avenue Baptist Church in Muswell Hill. Of red brick with limestone pillars, it is especially notable for huge plain glass windows which flood the church with light, and contain motifs and emblems associated with many different saints, martyrs and evangelists. Another feature is



*A view of St Benet Fink, Courtesy of Father Hill*

the wooden barrel-vaulted roof: striking in appearance, it also contributes wonderful acoustics to the building.

These, together with the fine late-18<sup>th</sup> century organ (inherited from St Peter Le Poer's in the City and later modified by the renowned Willis) make St Benet's a perfect venue for the organ recitals which take place one Sunday each month between April & October. Fr. Hill is himself a talented organist and, after his talk, played for us whilst we all had a good look around the church. For further information about the church or organ recitals, please visit:

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

# CIVITAS TOTTENHAM

## Join Us!

I/we would like to join the Tottenham Civic Society (TCS). Annual membership will provide four quarterly copies of the TCS newsletter CIVITAS and the opportunity to participate in ventures undertaken by TCS to promote and preserve the interests of Tottenham's history and its future.

I/we enclose a cheque for the following amount:

£5 per person unwaged, students and retired people

£10 individuals

£7.50 per person with two or more members in the same household

£15 for organisations with under 100 members

£20 for organisation with over 100 members

Name.....

Organisation.....

Address.....  
.....

Tel.....

Email.....

Do you wish to join the TCS email network?  
(Keeps members updated on news and events  
between newsletters)

Yes  No

Do you prefer to receive your copy of Civitas  
by post  or by email

Please make cheques payable to:

The Tottenham Civic Society

And send them to:

TCS, 61, Durban Road, Tottenham, N17 8ED

Thankyou

## Contacts

Chair: Matthew Bradby

Vice-Chair: Alison Armour

Secretary: Joseph Nicholas

Treasurer & Membership Secretary:  
Ann Robertson

### Committee members:

David Allen

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Rowan Kumar

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### TCS website:

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

### TCS email network:

<http://uk.groups.yahoo.com/group/TottenhamCS/>

To join this network, you need to follow the registration process and your membership will be confirmed by the group moderator. It's a great way to find out what's going on locally.

### TCS affiliations:

TCS is affiliated to Civic Voice, the new national charity that represents local civic and amenity societies. Visit their website at:

<http://www.civicvoice.org.uk/>

We are also affiliated to the London Forum of Amenity and Civic Societies - visit their website at:

<http://www.londonforum.org.uk/>

## Please Note

The views and opinions expressed in *Tottenham Civitas* are not necessarily those of Tottenham Civic Society.