

## **ST MARY'S WARD TRAFFIC ACTION GROUP**

### **Fed up with the ever-increasing traffic congestion following the expansion of Old Bexley Primary School? Then please read on:**

- The Local Government Ombudsman has upheld a complaint by Warwick Close residents and found Bexley Council have caused injustice to residents and are in breach of Condition 6 of the planning consent, whereby they failed to have a Travel Plan in place within one month of the commencement of the use of the new classrooms. The LGO instructed Bexley to have a Travel Plan in place within eight weeks of the LGO's decision. Warwick Close residents asked to be consulted on the Travel Plan. However, Bexley Council have simply written to us with a link to the planning application containing the Travel Plan, but have stated that it "is not the subject of the Council's formal neighbour notification procedure for planning submissions". As such, local residents are unable to comment on it. In view of the negative impact the school expansion has had on the surrounding road network, we have written to Alex Sawyer, our Ward Councillor and Cabinet Member for Traffic, to say that this is unacceptable.
- The school intake has increased from 678 in 2010 to 794, and will continue to increase by an extra Reception class each September to reach circa 880. That is an increase of over 200 pupils, with the resultant increase in vehicles of parents dropping off and collecting children at the school. The Council have failed to provide off-street parking to deal with this increase, leading to uncontrolled on-street parking which has led to the traffic chaos.
- There is no evidence that the suggestions by local residents to utilise unused parking capacity at Bexley station, or to have a rolling "in-and-out" drop-off point within the school car park have been taken up. We understand offers of parking were made by Bexley cricket club and the local athletics club. It is not known if these offers were promoted to parents by Bexley Council or the school and there is nothing to suggest in the Travel Plan that they have been utilised. In addition, for those parents who live out of the catchment area and drive to the school, there are options to park in the village car parks or to take up other parking offers.
- The Metropolitan Police have confirmed in writing the traffic chaos in the roads around the school, and it is a matter of record that emergency services have been unable to enter and exit Warwick Close due to traffic congestion.
- Despite persistent complaints to Bexley Council direct and to the

aforementioned Alex Sawyer, the only thing that has been done is to occasionally send traffic wardens to the area. This has had no impact.

- Bexley Council has declined to ticket offenders who sit with their vehicle engines idling, or to adopt any initiatives currently used by other London Borough Councils to discourage this behaviour.
- Warwick Close residents would like to join other residents affected by the traffic chaos in setting up a Traffic Action Group with a view to exerting pressure on Bexley Council demanding they take action to solve the traffic issues. Some London Boroughs have introduced measures to actively discourage parents parking within the school environs and promoted the use of public transport. **To register your support, please write or email a letter of complaint to Councillor Alex Sawyer at London Borough of Bexley, email address: [alex.sawyer@bexley.gov.uk](mailto:alex.sawyer@bexley.gov.uk)**  
**We have attached two versions of a template letter for those without internet access which simply require the addition of your name, address, date and signature. The version you choose can be used in its entirety or you may wish to adapt it. An online version is available on our website: [www.stmarysward.org](http://www.stmarysward.org)**
- We have photographic and video evidence of the traffic chaos and traffic offences relating to Warwick Close, but we need to collect evidence from those suffering in surrounding roads. **Please send us your video footage and/or photographic evidence to the following email address: [trafficactiongroup@stmarysward.org](mailto:trafficactiongroup@stmarysward.org)**