

## NOTICE OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

This meeting, which is open to all members and any interested residents, will take place on **FRIDAY the 2nd JULY** at the **NORTHUMBERLAND COUNTY CRICKET GROUND, OSBORNE AVENUE**, at **7.00 P.M.** There will be a short report on the year's work and finances and the committee for the next year will be elected. Refreshments will be served. Any resident who wishes to have an item placed on the Agenda should contact the Association by writing to them c/o the Jesmond Library or email to [adgcom@globalnet.co.uk](mailto:adgcom@globalnet.co.uk) Alternatively, a form can be obtained at the registration desk at the meeting.

# AUTUMN FOR THE LEAFY SUBURB?

## CONCERNS GROW AT INCREASING RESIDENTIAL DENSITY IN JESMOND

**A** RECENT BBC TV "Look North" feature highlighted the increasing problem of residential density in Jesmond, with more and more houses being purchased or converted to include additional living accommodation. In one street, out of a total of 56 houses and flats, there remain only 5 family houses.

More and more families are seeking to leave the area for less crowded and congenial surroundings.

The number of landlords making planning applications for loft conversions has not diminished, with more living space installed in the roof spaces in "Tyneside Flats".

### *Time for action, say residents*

THERE is an underlying resentment by residents at the growing number of houses let for student occupation and the attendant on-street car parking congestion.

With the influx of another 2,500 students this coming academic year, it is inevitable that absentee landlords whose only interest is to create additional living space will still target Jesmond.

What is frightening is that, once planning permission has been granted, any further internal alteration does not need further permission.

Significantly, student opinion seems to be that residents should accept the fact or leave the area.

Residents are becoming increasingly frustrated at the City Council's inability to control the loft conversions and the Government apparent unwillingness to face the problems of licencing HMO's. Proposals dealing with this in coming legislation seem weak and inadequate.

The JRA has campaigned for a number of years for control of HMO's and regularly submits objections to these loft conversions.

## JRA GOES "NATIONAL"

*THE Jesmond Residents Association has joined NORA, (National Association of Residents Associations), which exchanges information, news and views as well as keeping members up-to-date on existing and proposed legislation.*

*Alan Grant, Secretary of the JRA says, "It was gratifying to learn that Jesmond's problems are very similar to other areas in the country. Our joining NORA will greatly assist us to continue our efforts to preserve the character of Jesmond as most of us would like it to be."*

## GRESHAM HOTEL JUDGEMENT AWAITED

AS we go to press, the date of the High Court Appeal against the decision in March to quash the Licence for the Gresham Hotel was set for May 25th, though this may yet be deferred. The hotel remains open, although trading at a rather quiet level in the meantime, with a few exceptional nights such as the loud party into the small hours of 24th April.

## NEW JRA NOTICEBOARD

THE JRA Noticeboard, missing from the Acorn Road scene for many months, is to be re-erected at its old location at the corner of Acorn Road and Larkspur Terrace, next to the Community Noticeboard. Planning permission is being applied for and the design will be identical with the Community board.

The JRA will, as in the past, display planning and licencing applications together with items of local news and information.

## DUNN'S BUILDINGS APPLICATION REFUSED

A SECOND application for redevelopment was recently refused by the City Council. Whilst the JRA welcomes the conversion of commercial premises to residential ones, it still considered that the density was still too high. Another concern was the effect that the mass would have on Bell's Yard, the only children's dedicated play area in Jesmond.

## WARD BOUNDARY CHANGES WILL NOT AFFECT JRA

*THE NEW Ward Boundary changes, effectively splitting Jesmond into two Wards, North and South, and which will include part of Sandyford and Shieldfield, will mean that the JRA will have to liaise with another three Ward Councillors. However, the JRA's present boundaries (approximately the NE2 postal district) will encompass some of the new South Jesmond Ward*

## OSBORNE ROAD SAFETY SCHEME IN FINAL STAGES

THE FINAL STAGES of the Osborne Road Safety Scheme were shown recently at the Jesmond Library. Residents were able to study the plans and make observations of their own.

Amongst the measures proposed are light-controlled junctions and crossings at Acorn Road and Mistletoe Road, a roundabout at the junction of Osborne Road and North Jesmond Avenue, larger refuges (welcome to our elderly residents) and traffic calming measures along the "bar strip".

The JRA, which has been pressuring the City Council for safety measures ever since residents raised the issue of the "third drinking strip", welcomes the scheme.

## JRA CELEBRATES ITS FORTIETH BIRTHDAY

INDISPUTABLY the oldest Residents association in the City, the JRA has been in continuous existence since 1964. It was founded in 1964 initially to fight a massive domestic rates hike.

And still there are some of the same issues...

As a newsletter issued in 1970 reveals, some of the concerns are still with us. Jesmond suffered badly in the late 1960's from high residential density and poor housing conditions due to the conversion of large family houses into bedsits.

Today the Association still "battles" with the City Council. Because of its non-alignment and independence of local politics and funding, its voice, thanks to the hard work of its Committee and the support of its members, is a force majeure and carries weight in the corridors of power.

The Association works closely with Ward Councillors, who, it must be said, are a lot more receptive than back in the "old days" and our MP, as well as other bodies and authorities, a lot of such work being carried out "behind the scenes".

Nonetheless, the Association can only flourish and continue with the support of its members.

### Committee Members

Unfortunately, the JRA cannot function without the time and dedication of those who serve on its Committee, who take care of the day-to-day running.

If you have an interest in keeping Jesmond the way you would like it to be, perhaps you might consider becoming a Committee Member. Unfortunately, people tend to think that the JRA is something that other people are involved with, yet it's to the JRA that residents turn when problems arise.

## JESMOND DENE HOUSE TO BECOME LUXURY HOTEL

AFTER STANDING empty for many years, Jesmond Dene House, one of the area's most magnificent listed buildings, is to be redeveloped as a luxury hotel. The developers, Messrs. Riverside, who have assured the JRA that there will be no public drinking and that all functions will be pre-booked, have allayed fears that it would become yet another "drinking hole".

*Not our style, say the JRA.*

Just prior to an application for a Public Entertainment Licence, nearby residents were circulated with a scurrilous leaflet, which gave residents the impression that the JRA had been the author. The JRA's policy on leaflets is to detail the facts, without opinion, thus allowing residents to form their own judgement.

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### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

*The JRA acknowledges, with thanks, the donation given to it by **Tesco, of Acorn Road**, towards the cost of producing this Newsletter. Grateful thanks are also due to the other organisations and companies who placed advertisements.*

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### CONTACT THE JRA:

ALAN GRANT (0191) 281 0300 (adgcom@globalnet.co.uk)  
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or write c/o the Jesmond Library, St. Georges Terrace.

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## WE ARE NOT ALONE -JESMOND'S PROBLEMS ARE SHARED NATIONWIDE.

THE ENCROACHMENT of "vertical drinking factories", where hundreds stand around shoulder-to-shoulder, clutching their beverage of choice with their mouths the only available space to put their drinks and music at such an ear-splitting level that conversation is virtually impossible, is not confined to Jesmond or indeed, to Newcastle alone. Dozens of inner cities and small towns are now abandoned to the booze-fuelled zombies who make life hell for the rest of us. Confused licencing regulations allow operators to employ their own private security to throw troublemakers onto the streets leaving the police and the community to sort out the mess and attempt to invoke licencing sanctions. Unfortunately, the Government, in its wisdom, is quite happy to take the enormous revenues from binge-drinking, but is not doing anything constructive in curbing the unbridled social disorder that results from it.

The old traditional pub culture is fast disappearing. Now we have either the vertical drinking factories or gastro-pubs, who really cannot decide whether they are purveyors of booze or sea bream. The argument that the French have had relaxed licencing hours for a long time is no argument as their understanding that behaving like an idiot, or worse, in public, brings the indignity of shame. Sadly, this does not seem to apply here.

Tragically, the problems in Jesmond will remain. Let us hope that the authorities can control them and prevent more of such establishments opening up in the future.

The JRA will continue to oppose the opening of new establishments.