

## Bromley Town Centre Conservation Area

# Heritage Walks

### No 3- BROMLEY NORTH FROM MARKET SQUARE

North, South, East and West Streets,  
Tweedy and Widmore Roads,  
College Green & Slip

Following the coming of the railway in 1858 Bromley began to develop in a modest way by eastward expansion with new Roads on the line of old footpaths creating new housing and municipal buildings.

#### WEST STREET

**Your Move** at no 1 occupies the 1908 former offices of the Bromley Electric Light co. The power station built in 1898 was immediately behind here and although redundant survived until 1987 when it was demolished to build the Sainsburys store



appliances.

**The Houses** were constructed on the line of a footpath in the 1870s. The semi-detached villas presented a radical change with housing for the new commuters following the coming of

#### Treasures of China

restaurant occupies the town Fire Station built around 1898 in the Dutch-influenced Arts & Crafts style. It housed a single steam-powered pumping appliance. With the rapid growth of the town, the station soon became inadequate and gave way to the present station in South Street built in 1912 which could house five

the railway. The rest of the town still comprised of a few Georgian terraces, some grand houses and vernacular, timber-framed cottages.

#### COLLEGE GREEN AND SLIP

**College Green** was created as a public park in 1985 following the council's demolition of the remaining greenhouses, terminating what was then, the second oldest working nursery in Greater London, supplying plants and seeds since the mid-18th century. In the centre of the Green is a black Mulberry Tree planted by the trustees of Bromley College in 1720 and still bearing fruit. The tree had become overgrown by the 1985 planting and in association with the Friends of the Parks in 2007 the area was cleared back, the Mulberry set in an open circular bed and planted with plants known in the 17th century to complement the setting of Bromley College and the Mulberry



**College Slip** is one of our ancient footpaths which on old maps extended out to Bickley and beyond. The Old Cottage is a typical Kentish vernacular building built in the mid-18th century as a seedsman's cottage tied to the adjacent Nursery now College Green and is locally listed. In association with the

Friends of the Parks, the Slip has been planted with meadow flowers to give the feel of a country lane. On the corner is a Grade II listed **K2 telephone Kiosk**.

#### NORTH STREET

**No 1 North Street** has one of the few remaining stable blocks with the characteristic archway through to a rear courtyard.

**The Methodist Church** dates from 1987 and replaced the locally listed parish Church School which was built in 1854 to the designs of the architect James Piers St Aubyn. The demolition came about so as to re-site the Church from land required to build the Glades Shopping Centre.

**The rear elevations of East Street** reveal the working side of commerce with warehousing and quaint stables – which house half of **Bromley Little Theatre** (the other is in the old bakehouse of the Co-op).

#### EAST STREET

**The Railway Tavern** was built in 1879 by Berney & Son as was the Star and Garter for the Brewery, Nader & Collyer whose name is preserved in the brickwork on the north elevation. It is another fine example of the Arts & Crafts style and features decorative faience tile work on the exterior and quality wood carving inside. Locally listed.

Opposite, **Bromley North Station** is the perfect OO model railway station built in 1928 replacing a modest wooden structure; it is a Grade II Listed Building. The green copper dome atop the cupola compliments the one on the nearby Town Hall, Old Library and the former Magistrates' Court in South Street.

**O'Neills** occupies the *Drill Hall* built in 1872 as the first all-purpose entertainment centre doubling also as a drill hall for the 18th Kent Volunteer rifles. It is recorded that the Hall was opened with a concert where Sir Arthur Sullivan of G & S appeared as accompanist. It was the scene of grand banquets, exhibitions and concerts before being acquired by the GPO as a sorting office. It was saved from demolition after the Town Centre Conservation Area was designated in 1985. In its present use, as a pub, has preserved the original, simple, open interior.



**Alan de Maid** on the corner with West Street occupies the original offices of the Local Board built in 1868, later to become the Urban District Council before moving in 1904 to the Grand Town Hall in Tweedy Road. The extreme simplicity of this building belies its importance as marking the beginning of local democracy in Bromley. The bay window on

the first floor is one end of the Council Chamber intact until 2007 when a fire damaged the beautiful, vaulted interior.

On the corner with West Street, **The Old Post Office** is a fine locally listed building with Arts & Crafts detailing faced with terracotta tile work.

*Return back to :*

#### **SOUTH STREET.**

**No 8 was Mrs Knott's Dame School** where HG Wells gained his early education and is marked by a commemorative blue plaque. This terrace of cottages dates from the 1860s.

**The New Fire Station** dates from 1905 replacing the small station in West Street (now a restaurant). It was designed by the Borough Architect Stanley Hawkins in the neo-Georgian / streaky bacon Arts & Crafts style. The rapid growth of Bromley is demonstrated in the need for a station housing five appliances just seven years after that in West Street which housed just one.



**Community House** occupies the former *Magistrates Court* designed in 1939 by architect E Cowles Voysey along with the New Town Hall in Widmore Road which it adjoins. The design is Arts & Crafts/ Neo Georgian and the special features are the elegant and generously sized windows, the classical portico and the delicate green copper-domed cupola. Locally listed.

#### **TWEEDY ROAD**

Tweedy Road is named after local landowner Colonel Tweedy and constructed on the line of old footpaths in the 1880s & 90s.

**The Old Town Hall** dates from 1904 and is Grade II listed. It was designed by architect, RF Atkinson in what is often described in the 'Wren-naissance' style because of its

reference to the work of Christopher Wren one of the sources of inspiration to the architects of the Arts & Crafts movement. Some special features are the green copper cupola atop a wooden tower, the ornate neo-baroque portico and the hand-made glass paned windows of the Council Chamber.

Comparison with the original and modest council chamber,



now Alan de Maid's offices in East Street, demonstrates the massive change in prosperity in Bromley in just over thirty years.

#### **The School of Art and Science**

dates from 1878 and was extended in

1887. In 1898 the addition of the clock tower building with its characteristic green copper cupola added a new library before being superseded by that built in the High Street a few years later. The buildings are Grade II Listed and now divided into private dwellings. The words Art and Science are incorporated into the very fine neo-Jacobean decorative work on the gables typical of the architecture of the Arts & Crafts movement. The architect was John Sulman who also designed the old United Reform Church in Widmore Road (destroyed in WWII).

*Turn left into :*

#### **WIDMORE ROAD**

The modern corner building replaced a pair of 1860s houses where the Homeopathic Hospital was established until its move to a site beside Queens Garden in 1900. The adjacent terrace of grand 1860s houses are part of new Bromley, an area of affluent housing developed on open land from the 1860s along Widmore, Park and Frelands Roads and Palace Grove.

**The Baptist Church** with its fine rose window, dates from the 1860s and for a time stood alone in the fields. To the rear is a beautiful Sunday School and to the right the first House in what was to become known as New Bromley.

**The former Christian Science Church** is Grade II Listed and designed in 1928 by architect E Braxton Sinclair. It is an amazing fusion of classicism and Art Deco based on the design of a Roman tomb which accounts for the addition of a Mediterranean cypress tree as part of the integral landscaping. Special features are the classical pilasters in varying thicknesses of brick, repeated in the window tracery and the design of the carved wooden doors. Small hand-made bricks are used throughout.

**The former Police Station** on the corner of Kentish Way was built in 1914 to the designs of Dixon Butler in the neo-Georgian Arts & Crafts style. It was converted to housing in 2008. Special features are the use of small Georgian bricks, the bow windows with curved glass the decorative carved brickwork and the subtly curved brick columns (pilasters). Locally listed.

**The red brick building** on the corner of Kentish Way with modern additions is the former Dunn's depository built in the 1890s for Dunn & Co, of Market Square.

**The New Town Hall** is Grade II listed and an example of late Arts & Crafts neo-Georgian architecture. It was designed by E Cowles Voysey. He was the son of the distinguished Charles Voysey. He built it in 1939, along with the former Magistrates Court (Community House), at the rear, in South Street.

**The pizza restaurant** on the corner of Fyle Way (now a loading yard) was a pub, formerly called The Three Compasses. Note the fine green ceramic tiles. It was built in 1911, in the picturesque Arts & Crafts style replacing an ancient hostelry. It is locally listed.

**The terrace of shops** including Zizzis dates from the 1870s and typifies the modest character of this part of the town prior to the rise in affluence following the coming of the railway. Between two of the former villas, is the nightclub (Ora), and peeping down the alleyway, can be seen one of the few remaining stable blocks; now converted to an architects' office.

*Return to Market Square*

Produced by Bromley Civic Society and The Friends of Bromley Town Parks – June 2011, revised 2022.

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