



THE REIGATE SOCIETY

The Civic Society for Reigate, Redhill and Merstham

Newsletter No. 108

April 2014

CHAIRMAN'S NOTES

WE STILL NEED YOU!

Following my appeal in the last newsletter I am pleased to report that we have found a replacement Treasurer but we still need other volunteers for the following;

Vice Chairman

Society Representative on the Reigate Business Guild

Programme Organiser

Auditor

Publicity Officer

Heritage Open Day Organiser

If you are interested in any of the above vacancies then either contact me on mortlockar@gmail.com or the number below, or any of the Officers of the Society. Also you can use our website for contact details (<http://www.reigatesociety.org.uk/contact/>) then we can discuss where your interests lay and where your talents can be best utilised within the Society.

None of the above positions are particularly onerous or time consuming and the current incumbent will be available to brief you on the details and work with you to ensure a smooth transition. It is very important that we fill these vacancies to continue the smooth running of the Society. If we are unable to fill the Programme Organiser position very shortly then the current series of free lectures, which are very popular and well attended, will come to an end, which would be a great shame.

The Reigate and Banstead Core Strategy recommendations by the Planning Inspector have been published. Which is some ways is a good thing as at least there is a local plan in place,

rather than having one imposed on us by central Government. More detailed comments are given in the Architecture and Planning Report later in this Newsletter. If you feel that your voice is not being heard, in this, or other planning matters, then please consider joining our Architecture and Planning Committee, so you can have a voice.

As we have completed the 2013 Civic Awards applications can now be made for 2014. The application is open to all categories of building or facilities, the only stipulations are that it is completed and is located in the Borough. If you know of any suitable project then please contact me or Gwyther Joyce, the Chairman of the Architecture and Planning Committee.

As mentioned in the last Newsletter the work on The Priory is proceeding at a snails' pace and more and more problems seem to be coming to light. Despite letters to the Local and County Council we have not been able to ascertain what the current plans are for the repair and restoration of this historic building.

As some of you may have noticed the base for the 60th anniversary sculpture has been constructed adjacent to the twinning trees in the Priory by **Stanton Construction** (one of our corporate members). Unfortunately East Surrey College are unable to construct the brick plinth supporting the sculpture and we are looking at other options. When we know more we will let you know what is happening.

As a new initiative, we have decided to include a book review section in the Newsletter. The review will be for books written by local authors, or cover a local subject. The first review, "My side of the Fence" by Jeremy Early is in this newsletter. If you know of any local authors then please contact me

Alan Mortlock

01737

244407

SECRETARY'S NOTES

The 2013/2014 Open Meetings, organized by Claudia Payne, have been well attended. She has tendered her resignation from this role and is seeking a replacement. This is a vital service provided by the Society for its members and for the wider public. The talks all held in a variety of easily accessible venues in Reigate, Redhill and Merstham, and are well attended.

During this season so far members and visitors have gained an insight into; The Bluebell Railway (members only), Surrey Air Ambulance, G.F.Watts and the Watts Gallery, The Cranston Library and the History of the National Trust. There are still two talks remaining one entitled "Your water supply – every drop counts" and the talk at the AGM in July when traditionally the talk is an anticipated surprise.

Here are a few dates for your diaries:

The **Annual General Meeting** will be held in the Woodhatch Centre at 8.15pm on **Monday 7th July 2014**

The **Priory Park Community Festival** will be taking place again on **Saturday 28th June 2014** and it is anticipated that the Society will again have a presence there.

Heritage Open Days in the Borough of Reigate and Banstead will take place from **Thursday September 11th – Sunday September 14th 2014**. 2014 is the 20th Anniversary year for this event nationally so look out for some special events. As no-one has put their head above the parapet so far, **is there any interested member who could help me with HODS organization this year please?** The event organization starts in March!

The new venue of the Reigate Manor Hotel for

Members Evening was well received and many more of you attended which was very nice to see. The **2014 Members Evening** will be held on **Monday October 6th** and remains at the **Reigate Manor Hotel**. The ticket price remains at £12 which includes a free welcoming glass of wine or soft drink and a light snack buffet. There will be a cash bar for your convenience. The **2014 Civic Awards** will be made and this presentation will be followed by an interesting and entertaining talk. We hope to see many of you there that evening.

The 60th Anniversary Sculpture progresses well. Many of you may have noticed a concrete base, near the twinning tree, on the path in Priory Park crossing the park towards the Priory from the Cockshot Hill side of the park; this is where the sculpture is to be installed, on a brick seat base. There will be an announcement to members of the date of the sculpture placing, so that any member who would like to can attend. Lauren, the student from the Reigate School of Art and Design, at East Surrey College, whose design was chosen at the last AGM, has been working hard on the sculpture as well as doing her other course work. The finishing coat is being applied as this Newsletter goes to press.

The Society's website at www.reigatesociety.org.uk has much information on Society matters and events so please do make use of it. The Society has a fledgling Facebook page as well.

There is to be a slightly new updated image to the Reigate Society's literature in the coming months; one which we think will portray the Society and its ethos to the residents of Reigate, Redhill and Merstham in a more relevant manner.

Mrs Michèle Damer (01737) 243513

Email: heathfieldstables@dial.pipex.com

TREASURER'S NOTES

ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTIONS are due from the 1st April 2014 and the current MINIMUM RATES are as follows:

Individual Members	£8
Family Members	£12
Corporate Members	£25

Those of you who pay by bankers order should ensure that your Bank has the correct instructions for your subscription payment.

There is a payment form on page 6.

Charles Wragg (01737) 210640.

REGISTRAR'S NOTES

Since the last Newsletter, we have been pleased to welcome 4 new members:

**Mrs D Humphreys
Mr & Mrs I Jones
Mr A Rider**

Sadly, though, we have lost seven members and I would urge us all to encourage our friends to consider joining. The subscriptions are very modest and it gives members the opportunity not only to keep abreast of plans and developments in

the area but, through the work of our various committees, to influence the outcomes.

On the subject of subscriptions, we are approaching the end of our financial year – 31 March – by which time the subscriptions for 2013-14 are due. If yours is still outstanding, please use the form in this Newsletter and send your subscription to our Hon. Treasurer.

David Gardner

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COMMITTEE REPORTS

ARCHITECTURE & PLANNING

CHAIRMAN: GWYTHER JOYCE (01737) 249434

As reported in December's A&P Newsletter, the Reigate & Banstead Core Strategy Examination was reconvened last year on December 10th 2013 at the Town Hall by way of a post hearings amendment consultation to examine detail points of the original hearing. The outcome of the Inspector's review in February was to declare the Reigate & Banstead Plan has been approved in all aspects, as published in the Surrey Mirror.

However the furore in subsequent issues of the Surrey Mirror more recently demonstrates the confusion in Government over the issue, following comment coming from Nick Bowles the Government Minister responsible for Planning in his letter of 3rd March, directly criticising the Inspector for his handling of the examination into the Reigate & Banstead local plan. Specifically Mr Bowles points out the Inspector should have ensured the plan reflected government policy, which by inference it therefore did not, and the essential issue that planning bodies should maintain key protections for the countryside, particularly Green Belt was not made clear by the Inspector.

Logically, it would be expected the Borough should immediately prepare for their planned upcoming review by re-considering their position and reduce proposed construction so as to avoid the risk of having to build on Green Belt land in the future. Perversely this seems not to be the case with Cllr Miller quoted as stating the proposed number of new builds for the period should remain unchanged.

We have repeatedly made the point to the Borough that over many years it has deliberately followed a path of building large numbers of

dwellings, to a greater scale than any other nearby Borough, resulting in Reigate & Banstead being the most densely populated non-metropolitan borough in all England. Inexplicably, this scale of permitted building continues which will potentially be at the cost of irreplaceable Green Belt land as brownfield and windfall sites become more and more scarce.

Equally discouraging is the cause very much at the heart of our society, that of Reigate Priory repair works. For months there has been little or no activity, however towards the end of February there has been evidence of action by renovation specialists.

On a brighter note, we are very pleased to see the original lettering returned to the shopfront of Knights on Bell Street in January this year as a result of the determination of the Borough Conservation Officer lead by Mr John McInally. This outcome has been a long time coming however it is good to see an example here of some of the irreplaceable elements of the detail fabric in our Conservation Areas retained, protected and returned to their rightful position.

The Reigate Signal Box plan of action seems finally to have run into the 'buffers', as Network Rail stated position is that its proximity to the track will make it an ongoing liability and that it will not be possible to recover the costs of that liability. Furthermore they state the proximity of signal box to moving trains makes it unsuitable for any function outside the railway industry and therefore once current usage ceases, demolition will be

very likely. Our Society hopes to find another option, but the only currently apparent one of relocation appears financially prohibitive.

Redhill Aerodrome hard runway redevelopment has yet again been thrown out on appeal and provides at least one bright spot in the battle to

save Green Belt land in the Borough. How strange that this part of 'Green Belt' is protected while other areas are to be earmarked to be built on as approved under the flawed Core Strategy Examination.

REDHILL

CHAIRMAN: GERRY MOSS (01737) 765508

Probably the most obvious new development in Redhill is the first stage of the Balanced Network scheme. This has involved reorganisation of the Lombard roundabout ready for two-way traffic. The next phase will involve St Matthews Road and Station Road, which will become a three-way, traffic light controlled, junction. The final change to two-way traffic is at present expected to be in July. The reduction in the size of the station roundabout to provide more "pavement room" for cyclists, together with the reduction from two to one lane for cars entering the town from the east under the railway bridge, will negate much of the traffic flow gains from two way working.

One change, of much to concern to the Committee, is the removal of the centre island at Gloucester Road by the Lombard roundabout. Some drivers do seem to recognise that the raised platform is used by pedestrians to cross. It is to be hoped that a safety audit will improve this situation.

Work is due to start shortly on the Memorial Park. In order to complete the work as quickly as possible the Park will be closed for about six months. Panels are planned to be placed by the entrances to explain the significance of the Park as a memorial to the First World War. It is hoped to use the park for an event to mark the start of the First World War in November.

Two other developments in Redhill include Asda which has finally withdrawn from the Cromwell Road site. This area is probably going to no longer be zoned as a super market site. Development of the Liquid and Envy site seems now to be going ahead with a Tesco Express shop.

Plans for Station Road East are now clearer. It will be closed to traffic except for authorized users. New disabled parking will be provided in the Marketfield Way development. Subject to CCTV requirements addition trees may be planted between the Station roundabout and Maple Square. The trees in the centre of the roundabout will be retained.

Plans for the Marketfield Way site (the Marketfield Way car park through to the High Street) are now conceptual plans. The *Surrey Mirror* pictures showed it from across Marketfield Way. The plans show that the basement level will be for residents only; larger shop units on the ground floor; six screen (or more) cinema on the first floor; and about 90 new homes above. It is not clear where people coming to late night cinema showings will park. The other aspect is that it is not clear where traders in the High Street market are going to park their vans. Until a planning application is submitted it is probably too early to worry about the details as everything will probably change. However the market and cinema parking problems do need to be addressed.

It is expected that the redevelopment of the Station car park, behind the Toby Carvery, is likely to start soon. This multi-storey car park will need to be finished before work can start on redevelopment of the station car park on the west side. A welcome development is nearing completion at the station with refurbishment of the two lifts and adding a third from the booking hall to the cross passage.

TRANSPORT

CHAIRMAN: JOHN CHITTENDEN (01737) 242328

Gatwick & Heathrow Airports. Sir Howard Davies, Chair and Leader of the Airports Commission, recently stated that further public consultation will be launched next Autumn. RS report No. 50 may need to be updated. Comments are requested.

In the mean time the commission will investigate

transport and, hopefully, drainage at both the airports.

Flooding & proposed population expansion. Recent flooding within the Mole valley flood plain, both within the Borough and our two adjacent L.A.s of Tandridge and Mole Valley may present a

long term problem.

New housing, industry, schools and hard paved area development may increase the rate of storm water run off reducing the time of concentration within the rivers Mole and Eden. If the new Gatwick proposals go ahead involving new runways, paved areas, car parks and industrial sites this will also reduce the time of concentration of storm water.

Legislation requires county councils to approve, adopt and maintain SUDS, drainage systems and balancing ponds supplied by the developing contractors and providers of new housing, including airports, the cost of doing so in an effective and efficient manner may prove to be costly.

Should sea levels continue to rise at the rate of 3mm/annum it may prove necessary nationally to

follow the Dutch example of widening river outfalls so that maximum discharge can be achieved at low tide and with flood gates to prevent incoming rising tides from flooding low lying land and estates.

Roads & Transport.

Apart from the damage to bridge structures, floods also damage road foundations. The ingress of water into the subsoil turns the earth to mud with no strength to support the road foundation. In the Spring we are likely to see areas of failure that should be reported to the Highway Authority in the interests of road safety.

The Inspector's Report to R & B BC dated 31.01.14 is available. Some of the details are recorded in Report No.54 which is available on the RS website.

NATURAL AMENITIES

Priory Park. Most people will have heard already the news about the Right of Way (ROW) from Bell Street to Morrisons. This was approved at the last meeting of the Local Committee comprising both borough and county councillors despite vigorous opposition from the school. Although this is a major step forward it is not the end of the story because, under the complexities of ROW law, the route could still be the subject of a public inquiry if objections are registered even though the order has been signed. Any Inquiry would require further supporting letters from members of the Society and supporters of the ROW to ensure the order is upheld.

The repair work on the Priory building mentioned in the A & P committee report has resulted in the installation of two structures within the school site which do not have planning approval. The Society is monitoring the situation to ensure that proper procedures are followed by all parties and that these structures do not become permanent by default.

Reigate Heath Ian Wright and his Countryside Team are proceeding with the schedule of works and have the help of the Reigate Area Conservation Volunteers (RACV). A new Information leaflet about the Heath and its management has been produced which is available from the Town Hall and other outlets

CHAIRMAN: COLIN BURBIDGE (01737) 245264

including the leaflet holder on the Cricket Pavilion on the Heath.

The RACV have three work days scheduled for Reigate Heath before Easter so do look out for them if you are on the Heath on March 23rd which will be the final work day of the three.

A Reigate Heath Residents' Association has been formally set up and is represented on the Reigate Heath Management Steering Group for 2014. The Reigate Heath Residents' Association Constitution (10 July 2013) states that the area of interest includes properties and land comprising Flanchford Road to the north of the junction with Clayhall Lane, Bonnys Road, Reigate Heath, Heathfield, Trumpets Hill Road, Sandy Lane, Buckland Corner, Buckland Road, Cliftons Lane, Colley Manor Drive and Colley Lane. Residents of these roads are automatically members. Relevant planning application details are circulated to the group. Contact: reigateheathra@gmail.com to give your contact details.

Buckland Sand Pits. It is believed that sand extraction is to cease during this year but this has yet to be confirmed. If true then it will help to restore the much lowered water table. This may have happened to some extent already after this winter's rainfall as surface water has been seen lying in places which have not been wet for years.

BOOK REVIEW

My side of the fence by Jeremy Early

A review by Alan Mortlock

This book relates to the observations of the flora and fauna either in or visiting, one Reigate garden. It runs to nearly 250 pages and every page contains at least one photograph, many with more.

The quality of the photographs, virtually all taken by the author, is outstanding and, when combined to the accompanying text it makes it an easy read and source of reference.

The book is divided into chapters covering the whole spectrum of wildlife from mammals to invertebrates, again with amazing photographs and a comprehensive catalogue, including their Latin names.

The first chapter covers the flora and habitats, although the following chapter covers ponds, which I thought should be included as a habitat, but a small point. Otherwise the chapters are set out in a logical and easy to follow format.

The time, patience and effort that has gone into producing this book is staggering and results in a book that will enable others to easily identify and appreciate the flora and fauna in their own garden without this effort.

I would suggest that this handsome book be kept near to where you can observe your garden as a handy reference to the visitors or inhabitants of your garden.

The Reigate Society

President: Nicholas Owen

Chairman: Alan Mortlock, 3 Gatton Close, Reigate, RH2 0HG. Tel: 01737 244407

Hon. Secretary: Michèle Damer, Heathfield Stables, Reigate Heath, Reigate, RH2 8AA. Tel: 01737 243513

Hon. Treasurer: Charles Wragg, 3 Weald Way, Reigate, RH2 7RG. Tel: 01737 210640

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Please send completed form to:

Charles Wragg, 3 Weald Way, Reigate RH2 7RG

(NL 108)

CORPORATE MEMBERS

Note that all addresses are of Reigate town and all telephone numbers have the code 01737, unless otherwise stated

	Address	Business
Bakers Radio Ltd	6 Western Parade, Prices lane RH2 8AU (240543 / 242322)	TV, Electrical Retailers
Care Unlimited	Chaldon Rise Mews, Rockshaw Road, Merstham RH1 3DE (645171 / 646266)	Care Homes
Care Homes of Distinction Ltd	Wray Park, 55 Alma Road RH2 0DN (242778)	Care Homes & Property Development
Crow Watkin	14 Bell Street RH2 7BE (245886)	Independent Estate Agents, Surveyors & Valuers
Dunottar School	High Trees Road, RH2 7EL (761945)	
East Surrey College	Claremont Road, Gatton Point, Redhill RH1 2JX (772611)	
Michael Jones & Associates	Crossway House, 8 London Road RH2 9HY (245610)	Engineering Consultants – Building Services
Keymex Ltd	59-61 Bell Street RH2 7AQ (240171)	Domestic Appliance Sales, Service & Repairs
Holmesdale Building Society	43 Church Street RH2 0AE (245716)	Your local Building Society for all your mortgage and investment needs
La Barbe Restaurant	71 Bell Street RH2 7AN (241966)	Restaurant & Outside Catering
Micklefield School	10 Somers Road RH2 9DU (242615 / 224211 / 224212)	Independent Preparatory School for boys and girls age 2½ to 11
Ormerods	Suite 4, Chapter House, 33 London Road RH2 9HZ (0208 686 5000)	Solicitors
Reigate Architects	59 Nutley Lane, RH2 9HP (222099)	Architecture and Sustainability
Reigate Heath Golf Club	Reigate Heath, RH2 8QR (226793)	Golf Club
Reigate Priory Cricket Club	Park Lane, RH2 8JX (244477)	Cricket Club with senior & junior sections
Reigate Priory School	Bell Street RH2 7RL (245065 / 240229)	
Royal Alexandra & Albert School	Gatton Park, RH2 0TW (649050)	Boarding school for boys and girls ages 7 to 18
Stanton Construction	1Castlefield Road RH2 0SA (227430)	Development & construction service to industry, public & commercial sectors
Stentor Music Co Ltd	Albert Road North, RH2 9EZ (240226)	Manufacturers and Distributors of Musical Instruments
Stoneman Funeral Service	Doran Court, Reigate Road, Redhill RH1 6AZ (763456)	Funeral Directors & Memorial Craftsmen
TWM Solicitors LLP	40 West Street RH2 9BT (221212)	Solicitors
White & Sons	24 High Street RH2 9AY (222600)	Independent Estate Agents, Surveyors & Valuers