



# THE REIGATE SOCIETY

The Civic Society for Reigate, Redhill and Merstham

Newsletter No. 100

September 2011

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## CHAIRMAN'S NOTES

Following Colin Burbidge's appeal in previous newsletters I volunteered to stand as Chairman of the Society as Colin had reached the end of his 5 year term as required by the Constitution. On July 4<sup>th</sup> I was duly elected and am pleased that Colin will be my Vice Chairman, to provide the necessary support and guidance that I will certainly need. Luckily the other Officers were re-elected to continue the good work they are currently undertaking. Claudia Payne retired from the Vice Chairman post and was elected as a member of Council.

I am also privileged that my maiden submission to the Newsletter coincides with the 100<sup>th</sup> edition; this milestone shows the continuing support and commitment to the Society from everyone involved, from Officers and more importantly the general members. Without them there would be no Reigate Society, no 100<sup>th</sup> edition or 60 year anniversary next year. My sincere thanks goes to all the membership for their continued support along with the wish that the Society lasts for the foreseeable future.

Over the coming months I will be endeavouring to become more familiar with the workings of the Society. Although I have been a member for a good number of years, I have never been involved in this area and look forward to seeing how it is done.

The Registrar's report indicates that we are losing members, albeit at a slow rate, but a trend we need to reverse if we are to remain a voice that is heard in local affairs. Recently we manned a stall at Reigate Priory Park Community Festival to help promote the Society and we have a regular attendance at Gatton Park open days to raise our profile. However, the best means of increasing membership is by word of

mouth, so I would urge you to talk to your friends and even offer them the membership application form contained in this newsletter.

While membership declines, the use of email is increasing, now up to about 150. Although this is a good number it is under 20% of our membership and it would certainly help our finances and delivery administration to increase this number. To join our emailers please contact the Registrar on [johnangel170@btinternet.com](mailto:johnangel170@btinternet.com) we would assure all our email contacts that you will only receive the newsletter and important, selected messages.

Seven nominations have now been received for the 2011 Civic Awards, details of which are contained in the Architectural and Planning report and we look forward to the judges' decision.

While on the subject of planning, if you, or your neighbours, are aware of a planning application that you consider of merit, or otherwise, then please contact us through our website.

As mentioned in the last newsletter National Trust and now English Heritage vouchers are available through Civic Voice website. To obtain vouchers for English Heritage follow this link <http://www.civicvoice.org.uk/about/partners/english-heritage/english-heritage-civic-voice-pass/> for National Trust vouchers follow the link <http://www.civicvoice.org.uk/nationaltrustcivicvoiceoffer>

Finally, I am looking forward to my new job as Chairman and the continued support of all those associated with the Society and if there is anything you would like to bring to my attention please do not hesitate to contact me.

**Alan Mortlock**

**(01737) 244407**

## SECRETARY'S NOTES

The Society's **59<sup>th</sup> Annual General Meeting** took place on 4<sup>th</sup> July in the Woodhatch Centre. About 40 members attended. The Chairman Colin Burbidge welcomed Chris Heaps, the Chairman of Dorking and District Preservation Society. Both the Chairman and the Vice Chairman were to retire, having served their allotted five years. Colin introduced Alan Mortlock, who had agreed to stand as Chairman. An engineer by profession and living in the North of Reigate, he was duly elected. Claudia Payne's position as Vice Chairman was filled by Colin Burbidge. The three existing Officers were re-elected: Charles Wragg as Hon Treasurer, John Angel as Hon Registrar and myself as Hon Secretary. Three members of the Council retired by rotation: Joyce Crosfield, Ray Lewis and Alan Smith. They had agreed to stand again. In addition Susan Walker, who had been co-opted during the year, Claudia Payne, the retiring Vice Chairman and Gwyther Joyce, the Chairman of the Architecture and Planning Committee were proposed. All six were voted onto the Council. The Council now has 20 members.

In his Chairman's report, Colin said that the County had put in a bid for Surrey Travel Smart. Not much is known what this will do, but he understood that there was £16 million available between six towns. The on-street parking proposals were still under review by the Borough. He reported that the Society's database of members' e-mail addresses had risen to 140. This was an efficient way of contacting members and he hoped that more would send in their details.

He finished off his report by saying that he had not sought the position of Chairman but once he had got into the job he had enjoyed his five years. He thanked everyone who had helped make it work, especially his Vice Chairman Claudia Payne.

Following the formal business of the AGM there was an illustrated talk by Kenneth Bare on "The Surrey Hills and the Surrey Hills Society". He opened his talk by reminding us that this area is an "Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty" which confers on it the advantages of a National Park. It is the most wooded county in England, and the Surrey Hills is 40% woodland. Although nearly half is classified as agricultural land much is not used as such. The Surrey Hills Society's aims are to promote greater awareness of the area. It encourages conservation and attempts to resist threats such as gas and oil exploration and overhead pylons. Its membership is increasing and Kenneth encouraged those present to join or attend some of its event which are publicised on its website [www.surreyhillssociety.org](http://www.surreyhillssociety.org).

**Heritage Open Days** will be from Thursday 8th to Sunday 11th September, when 24 venues will be open. The whole event in the Borough has been organised and publicised by the Society, and once again the Undercroft to the rear of 16 West Street in Reigate will be opened on the Saturday and manned by volunteers from the Society.

**Members' Evening** will be held at the Woodhatch Centre on Monday 10<sup>th</sup> October at 8pm. As usual there will be drinks and a finger buffet, followed by the presentation of the Society's Annual Awards. This will be followed by a talk "**The Gentlemen of Gatton and Merstham**" by Alex Hunter. While there are virtually no ancient monuments in Merstham or Gatton, both have a very long and interesting history. Alex's talk focuses on both the national characters that were based in Merstham and on the key owners of Gatton's 'rotten' borough, drawing comparisons with current topics: History may not repeat itself, but historical situations do! Always popular, this evening is frequently oversubscribed, as we are limited in numbers. If you wish to attend please fill in the form at the back of this newsletter; enclose a cheque for £10 (still no increase in price) and a stamped addressed envelope and send it to me as soon as possible to avoid disappointment.

The first of our two meetings this autumn is on Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> November at Holmesdale School in Alma Road, Reigate. Carolyn Burnley will be giving a talk on "**Reigate Priory – Another Chapter**". An opportunity to see this new film, which brings the story of the Priory right up to date, and to hear about its creation from the producer.

On Thursday 1<sup>st</sup> December at the Priory School in Bell Street Reigate, we try again to welcome Ros Black whose scheduled talk last year was cancelled due to the weather. Her talk "**Duxhurst, Lady Henry Somerset's village for inebriate women**" is based on her recent book about the life of Lady Henry Somerset. Ros Black focuses on the village Lady Henry built at Duxhurst, south of Sidlow, which became a charitable community.

All these Open Meetings start at 8.15pm and are given on your Programme cards. Details of these and much more can also be seen on the Society's web site [www.reigatesociety.org.uk](http://www.reigatesociety.org.uk).

**Michael Hellings**

**(01737) 245342**

**Email: [mandmhellings@talktalk.net](mailto:mandmhellings@talktalk.net)**

## TREASURER'S NOTES

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ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTIONS were due from the 1<sup>st</sup> April 2011 and the current MINIMUM RATES are as follows:

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

The rates changed on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2011 and those of you paying by bankers should have changed the instructions to your bank.

There is a payment form on page 6.

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## REGISTRAR'S NOTES

Since the last Newsletter we have welcomed 5 new members, 3 Ordinary and 2 Corporate. They are:

**Mr H Brown**

**Mr & Mrs Mistry**

**Stentor Music Company    Reigate Architects**

This is the time of year when I review the records of last year's subscription payments. As usual, I see that there are a number of members who haven't paid last year's subs. If you think that you might be one, please check with me (phone 242672). In any case I will be sending out reminders shortly.

Our e-mail list is still expanding, with nearly 150 Newsletters going out that way. If you want to be added to the list let me know (my e-mail address is at the bottom). If you have an e-mail address, but still like to have a hard copy of the Newsletter, this is OK, but we would still like your address for any other urgent communications that we might have to make.

If you pay your subs by Bankers Order, have you remembered to change the details to cover the new rates?

If you have any queries about your subscriptions please call or e-mail **ME**.

**John Angel**

**(01737) 242672**

**Email: [johnangel170@btinternet.com](mailto:johnangel170@btinternet.com)**

## Volunteer to maintain the Society's WEB site

Since 2004 the Reigate Society WEB site has been created and maintained voluntarily by a member. Due to ill health he needs to give up this responsibility, and the Society is looking for a volunteer to take over the task.

The site is built using HTML (hypertext mark up language), and is highly modular and structured. Anyone with experience of modular structured programming, even if it is not up to date should have no difficulty in understanding enough HTML to insert new data into the site within its present structure.

Such updates are needed on average about once a month. Similarly, limited extensions to the site made by copying and adapting existing code are reasonably straightforward. Obviously help would be given to a new volunteer in terms of recommending HTML manuals, explaining the site's structure, and coaching through typical updates.

However, if you know and would want to use a different site building and maintenance technology, the Society would be willing to consider you building a new site instead of taking over the existing one.

If you are interested in taking responsibility for the Society's WEB site, please contact us at [Reigate.society@btinternet.com](mailto:Reigate.society@btinternet.com)

## **ARCHITECTURE & PLANNING**

**Chairman: Gwyther Joyce (01737) 249434**

Previous warnings over new planning legislation through the Decentralisation and Localism Bill can now be further expanded as the Coalition Government put further flesh on the bones of their policies.

The Bill adds significantly to local powers whereby councils can make decisions locally on such issues as whether and where to build such projects as new houses, shops, industrial estates, rubbish dumps, car parks and railway stations. The motivation behind this is Government want to free up our planning system of the massive red tape that currently exists which they say is strangling economic growth.

Critically, the new legislation states there is a presumption in favour of development which effectively turns current legislation on its head. Instead of developers having to prove there is the need for new building, the objectors will have to prove why they should not be built by showing it will cause damage to the environment or to the historic heritage of the local area.

The 'presumption for development' is feared to place our Green Belt areas at risk, as Government's own impact assessment expressly states reforms 'could lead to greater development on the Green Belt.'

This lays a path for some of our least desirable developments to possibly move forward, of particular note being the future development of Redhill Aerodrome.

And Tesco's rejected proposal for Redhill has an appeal period which ends 17<sup>th</sup> August, just a few days away at the time of writing however no appeal has yet been received.

I have been involved with this year's Civic Awards programme, and must thank members for the number of proposals put forward, which

shows how much we all take an interest in our surroundings which is very encouraging. A stimulating and informative day was spent viewing seven projects for the annual award, which interestingly included three church community centres. Our decision on the Awards will be published in the autumn. The inspecting panel was accompanied by our Chairman Alan Mortlock and one of the Guildford Society member Architects, who very kindly agreed to act as outside adjudicator on the Civic Award team.

Other than the Redhill Aerodrome application, the A&P Committee has not received any significant recent applications, although we understand the applications for the new ASDA development in Cromwell Road is expected this autumn.

Sainsbury's development in Redhill remains under consideration by the Council with respect to the key issue of highways, and traffic movement and which we are advised will continue until the end of August 2011.

Unfortunately permission has been given for sand extraction at Chilmead Farm and naturally residents of Nutfield are very concerned about the heavy lorry traffic that will be involved.

The committee has asked for a response from Reigate & Banstead Council over what appears to be a growing proliferation of pavement located café tables and chairs as well as A' board advertising. In principle we have no objection to the colourful addition of pavement furniture as attractive features of street life in our towns however they should be properly controlled and managed.

During my short time as Chairman of A&P, I have enjoyed the opportunity of meeting some of our counterparts in the Guildford Society, of particular note being the Annual Architecture Lecture held at Surrey University Campus in June where the presentation by RIBA President Elect Angela Brady was most interesting.

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## **REDHILL**

**Chairman: Gerry Moss (01737) 765508**

We are still in the gestation period leading up to consultation on a revised (again) Redhill Town Action Plan expected towards the end of the year. No doubt the Council officers are heavily involved in drawing up their proposals. No one wants them to have to start again and the question is whether there will then be any scope for radical change.

Meanwhile the Society has attended two meetings of the Redhill Regeneration Forum, the operation of which was described in the Annual Report. It is made up of Officers, Councillors and representatives of local interested parties. It is advisory with no powers. In May we heard from the police that there had been a reduction in crime in the Borough over the last six months. Most of the street crime in Redhill occurs after 11.00pm. Liquid and Envy has since closed and the site sold to Anglo Property. Now we are

hearing of concerns for activity for the young and the effects on the "night time economy," one of the aspirations of the old town plan. Also at that meeting the Society proposed a resolution which was passed supporting the Surrey County Council's bid for government funds for sustainable transport improvements which would NOT include signalisation of the Station and Lombard roundabouts.

The meeting in July was at the new impressive building of East Surrey College. Much of that meeting focussed on the creation of a body to foster the development of the town and the appointment of a Town Centre Manager to coordinate business and social activity as well as ensuring an attractive environment. This without charge on the public purse.

**Supermarkets:** There is no sign of an appeal by Tesco against the refusal to grant them planning permission. Asda is still interested in the Cromwell Road site and are in discussion with the Borough but no application has yet been made for a food store. The Sainsbury application is under discussion and there is some disquiet on the size of the proposal and the range of non food items and their effect on other town traders. No one wants Redhill to become a "one horse town", except perhaps Sainsbury's. There is more detail on the proposed glass staircase to the Library and Harlequin. We do not consider this will be fit for the purpose. Sainsbury has now put in its proposals for right hand turns into and out of its new entrance to Princess Way in conjunction with the County. Road modelling suggests that increased delay on Princess way will generally be less than a minute except for one period when it approaches two minutes. How this fits with the congestion during the rush hours is difficult to see. We now need to ascertain what delay would occur if the right turns were not used and traffic entered using the current circulatory system. One spin off is that the modelling made no comparison using "Scoot" and signalised roundabouts so let us hope that that is finally buried. On the other hand the proposals hope that holding traffic at this right turn entrance will enable the Lombard roundabout to function

better with no other changes.

**Redhill Town Action Plan:** The Society has now put in papers on Roads, Town Square, Retail Growth, and Pedestrian and Cycle movement. We have also pressed for the appointment of a landscape architect to see what can be done to create the ambience of a "Green Belt Town". No responses have been received. We held a meeting for Redhill Town Councillors and are grateful to the three who attended. Was it pressure of work or lack of interest which prevented the others? We were encouraged by the common views on the roads problems.

What concerns us most is that whilst there is much activity on land values and, for example, researching market interest in Redhill, (apparently the medium sized chains have no interest in the town), there seems to be a lack of vision. One Councillor said "if only Debenhams would come". A better approach would be "what can we do to convince Debenhams that Redhill is an opportunity they cannot afford to let slip to a competitor". Local population is planned to grow further. What is needed is the creation of a town to which retailers and customers alike will want to come.

Tribal Urban, at considerable cost, set out a vision which failed to address the practical problems and, in spite of its flamboyant prose, was reactive rather than creative. The next action plan will be less colourful and more directed but will it solve the problem of this declining town?

Our papers on the Town Square and Retailing emphasise the considerable advantages which Redhill does have over other local towns. Besides being a major hub it has space for development. In particular the Marketfield site is in the hands of the Council to do as it wishes. Here is the opportunity to create a different market area with a small focal town square in the very heart of the town. We look forward to the next plan with optimism tinged with trepidation.

**Harry Ingram (Secretary)**

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## **NATURAL AMENITIES**

**Chairman: Colin Burbidge (01737) 245264**

The Borough's proposals for an extended **household recycling** service were finally approved at the end of July. It is understood that the new system will commence during the summer of 2012 with a phased introduction for

houses. The phased introduction for flats and communal buildings will be made during 2013. The existing bins for paper and residual waste will then be supplemented by additional containers for plastic and cans and for food waste (a small one indoors and a larger one for outdoors). Food and paper waste will be collected weekly and the remainder fortnightly.

**Sand extraction** at Buckland. The environmental impact issues are still being re-examined by Hanson after which an appeal is expected against the decision to refuse an extension to the working life of the pits.

**Reigate Heath.** The recent Exhibition in the Cricket Pavilion had elicited a good response after a slow start. The results of the photographic competition would be posted on the **Friends of Reigate Heath** website which is soon to be improved.

**Priory Park.** Although a number of the people who submitted evidence forms in support of the claim for a public right of way between the Priory building and Morrison's car park were interviewed earlier in the year by Surrey County Council Countryside Access staff, not all who were

informed that they would be interviewed were actually seen. It is presumed that the evidence is now being assessed and it has been suggested that a decision might be expected at around the end of the year.

Some changes have occurred in the management and maintenance of the park and the Conservation Volunteers have continued their previous planting work in the lake. They have also been continuing similar activity at Earlswood Lakes.

As members of the Colley Wood Syndicate the Society has raised the condition of **Colley Field** with the Company. Subsequent discussion of how to deal with the invading scrub is proving to be extremely slow but efforts will continue to try to get the field back into a better condition.

|                            |   |
|----------------------------|---|
| <b>The Reigate Society</b> |   |
| <i>President:</i>          | Nicholas Owen   |
| <i>Chairman:</i>           | Alan Mortlock, 3 Gatton Close, Reigate, RH2 0HG. Tel: 01737 244407    |
| <i>Hon. Secretary:</i>     | Michael Hellings, 53 West Street, Reigate, RH2 9BZ. Tel: 01737 245342 |
| <i>Hon. Treasurer:</i>     | Charles Wragg, 3 Weald Way, Reigate, RH2 7RG. Tel: 01737 210640       |

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**Subscription Payment / Banker's Order Form**

**NAME(S)** .....

**ADDRESS** .....

**Email** .....

- |                          |  |                         |
|--------------------------|--|-------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <b>I enclose my subscription for 2011 /2012</b><br>(Cheques should be made payable to 'The Reigate Society') | <b>Individual</b> ..... |
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| <input type="checkbox"/> | <b>Please send me a Banker's Order form for payment of future subscriptions.</b>                             |                         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <b>I also enclose my subscription for 2010 / 2011</b>  | <b>Individual</b> ..... |
|                          |  | <b>Family</b> .....     |
|                          |  | <b>Corporate</b> .....  |

**(Please tick box applicable)**

**If you are not a member and would like to join please tick here**

**Please send completed form to:**  
**Charles Wragg, 3 Weald Way, Reigate RH2 7RG**

(NL 100)

## CORPORATE MEMBERS

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

|                                 | <b>Address</b>  | <b>Business</b>   |
|---------------------------------|---|---|
| Bakers Radio Ltd                | 6 Western Parade, Prices lane RH2 8AU<br>(240543 / 242322)              | TV, Electrical Retailers  |
| Care Unlimited                  | Chaldon Rise Mews, Rockshaw Road,<br>Merstham RH1 3DE (645171 / 646266) | Care Homes  |
| Care Homes of Distinction Ltd   | Wray Park, 55 Alma Road RH2 0DN<br>(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<br>(772611)               |   |
| Iain Johnston                   | 4 Chart Lane (244160)   | Podiatrist  |
| Michael Jones & Associates      | Crossway House, 8 London Road<br>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<br>(242615 / 224211 / 224212)                    | Independent Preparatory School for boys and girls age 2 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub> to 11 |
| Ormerods                        | Suite 4 Chapter House 33 London Road<br>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<br>(245065 / 240229)                                |   |
| Royal Alexandra & Albert School | Gatton Park, RH2 0TW (649050)   | Boarding school for boys and girls ages 7 to 18   |
| Stanton Construction            | 1 Castlefield 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<br>(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  |

**THE OCTOBER MEMBERS' EVENING**

**On Monday, 10<sup>th</sup> October 2011  
At THE WOODHATCH CENTRE  
7.30 pm for 8.00 pm**

For ticket(s) please complete the top half of this form and send the **WHOLE PAGE** as soon as possible with your remittance and a **STAMPED ADDRESSED ENVELOPE** for the return of the ticket portion to:

Mchael Hellings,  
53 West Street, Reigate, RH2 9BZ.

Tel. 01737 245342

Name (s) ..... Tel. No.....

.....  
I/we apply for..... tickets @ £10.00 a head      Total £ .....

I would like a map  (tick if required)

*Cheques should be made payable to the Reigate Society*

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**THE OCTOBER MEMBERS' EVENING**

**7.30 pm for 8.00 pm Monday, 10<sup>th</sup> October 2011**

**Name(s) ..... Ticket No(s) .....**

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**To be held at the Woodhatch Centre, Whitebeam Drive, Reigate**

***This ticket covers admission and the buffet with a glass of wine (or soft drink)***